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STALYBRIDGE

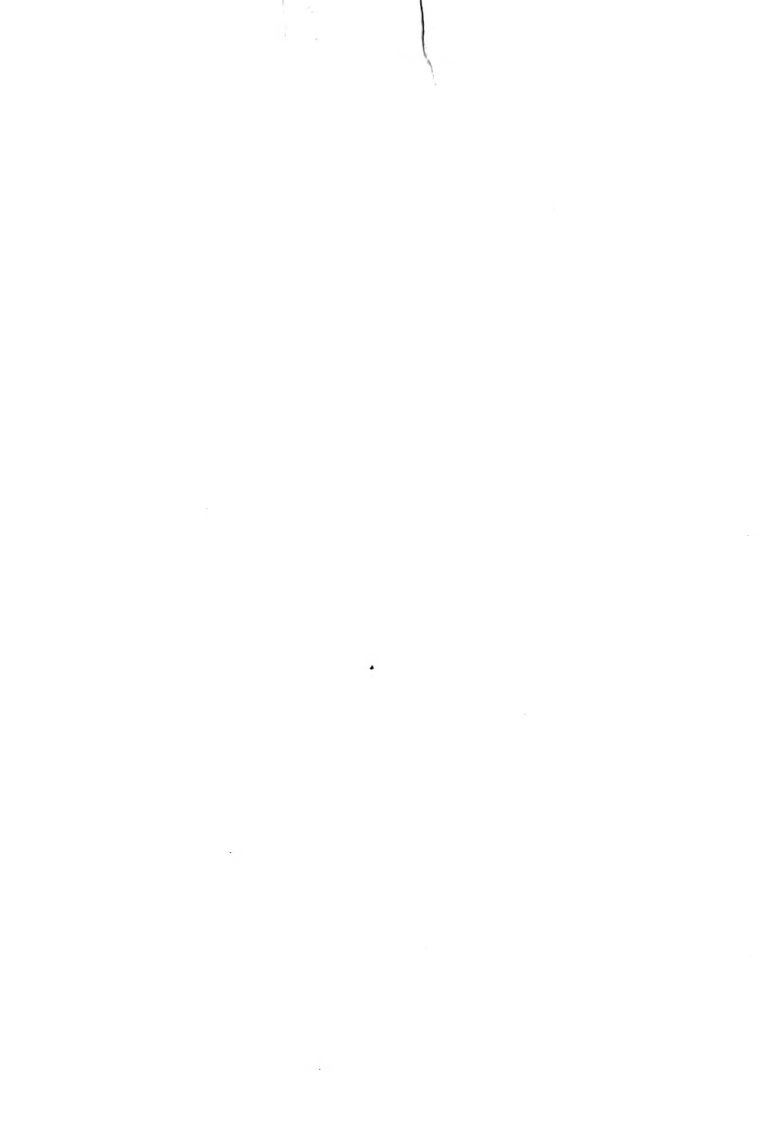
SAMUEL HILL





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SMALL PAPER EDITION

# BYGONE STALYBRIDGE

TRADITIONAL - HISTORICAL - BIOGRAPHICAL

By SAMUEL HILL

AUTHOR OF

"Old Lancashire Songs and their Singers," (1899),

"Lancashire Poets and their Poems, (1900),

"Foirewood, or Splinters an' Shavin's fro' a Carpenter's Bench," (1902),

"Little Spadger's Dog, and other Sketches," (1906),

"Old Lancashire Songs and their Singers," (1906), Second Issue,

"Local Poets of the Past," &c., &c.

Printed for the Author, and sold by him at his residence,  
78, Hamilton Street, Stalybridge.

1907.

DEDICATION.

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED TO  
*Captain John Bates,*  
CHIEF CONSTABLE OF STALYBRIDGE,  
IN TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FOR HIS KINDLY  
ADVICE AND HELP TO  
THE AUTHOR WHEN WRITING  
THESE PAGES,  
BY  
*Samuel Hill.*





## PREFACE.

**T**HE books dealing with the History of Stalybridge are few in number, and fortunate, indeed, is the library possessing a complete collection—if such a thing exists.

The rise of its important trade, the cotton manufacture, has scarcely been chronicled, or its early pioneers mentioned. Of the many worthy natives and residents of the vale in the past, little is known; their worth, work, and quality having almost sunk into obscurity.

For a longer period than I care to admit it has been a self-imposed task to gather and glean whatever might be considered of interest to my fellow townspeople.

Early in the spring of the present year I read a portion of manuscript to Captain Bates, and he, in the presence of Alderman Fentem, suggested that a book dealing with the past connections of Stalybridge should be written, at the same time promising his support. Alderman Fentem immediately seconded the idea by saying,

“I will stand my corner.” Subsequently, J. F. Cheetham, Esq., M.P., was waited upon, and gave me such generous help as to lead me to hope for success in my venture.

With such an inauguration, and the untiring energy of another friend, the scheme assumed shape. The names of various gentlemen were added, and the list of patrons and subscribers grew. All classes of people supported the idea, and my task commenced in reality.

For reference and verification the following books have been used:—“Aiken’s History of Manchester,” 1795; “Butterworth,” 1823 and 1827; Dr. Clay’s “Geology,” 1839; “Butterworth,” 1841; the various Histories of Lancashire and Cheshire; the early Directories of 1794-5-6-7, 1818, 1825 and 1848; “Facts of the Cotton Famine”; “History of the Indian Mutiny,” American data and statistics, etc., etc.

Attention has also been given to the Geological Charts and Ordnance Survey Maps, issued by the Government, relating to this district.

The kindness of the ladies and gentlemen who have furnished me with facts concerning their respective families is gratefully acknowledged. The privilege of access to local burial-registers, and other documents, has been of great service, and it has been a pleasure to experience the willingness of the older residents of the town to

answer the somewhat searching questions necessary for my purpose. From the mass of newspaper cuttings and fragments of manuscript, gathered from all sources, much valuable information was unearthed and traced.

I believe that the book will be of interest—if not now at some future period, when a far more able writer than I am may find these gleanings of use and service.

Finally, I beg to heartily thank all those ladies and gentlemen who have honoured me with their patronage as subscribers ; had it not been for the generous help of my fellow-townsmen, this volume could not have seen the light of day

SAMUEL HILL.

78 Hamilton Street  
Stalybridge

9th November, 1907.



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## INTRODUCTION.

“Home, the spot of earth supremely blest,  
A dearer, sweeter spot, than all the rest.”

*Montgomery.*

**I**N ancient times the name of the place now known as Stalybridge was Stavelegh or Stayley, the addition of the word “bridge” having occurred when the first bridge was erected over the river-ford. Situated in the vale of the Tame, which divides Lancashire from Cheshire, there are few manufacturing towns of the same area with so varied a surface level, for whilst the bed of the river at its lowest point is little more than 320 feet above sea level at Liverpool, the uplands, hills, and moors in the vicinity rise with varied gradients to the height of 800, 900, and even 1,300 feet. The climate, which is moist and cold, is said to owe its conditions to the high ridges of the Pennine Range, from which the clouds rebound and discharge their rain in these districts. Up to the year 1896 “the localities and parochial connexions of Stalybridge were singular : it was partly in the Hundred of Macclesfield, in the

County of Chester, but principally in the Hundred of Salford, in the County of Lancaster, one-eighth part of the inhabitants residing in the parish of Mottram-in-Longdendale, and the remaining seven-eighths in the division of Hartshead, in the parishes of Ashton and Stockport."

"Since 1896, however, Stalybridge has been a distinct township in the County of Chester, for administrative purposes. The section of the town situated in Lancashire, is, for ecclesiastical purposes, still in the rural deanery of Ashton, archdeaconry and diocese of Manchester, the Cheshire portion belongs to the rural deanery of Mottram, archdeaconry of Macclesfield, and diocese of Chester."

The position of Stalybridge is very central, and its railway communications exceptionally convenient, direct connections existing to all parts of the country.

By road it is distant from Manchester  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles, Oldham  $5\frac{1}{2}$ , Macclesfield 19, Huddersfield 18, Sheffield 30, Stockport 7, and London 182. The pedestrian who knows the country can find shorter routes.

*BYGONE STALYBRIDGE.*

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## PART I.

### EARLY RECORDS OF THE VALE.

#### Chapter 1.

The Vale of Stayley—Natural Resources—Geological formation—Mines and Minerals—The River Tame.

“Beyond a certain limit all is but conjecture.”

*Taylor.*

**T**HE Parish of Stayley, according to the geological charts, is outside the area of the local coal measures. A series of “faults,” or dislocations of the strata, is shown in the ordnance surveys, whilst the two great local out-crops, of the “lower coal measures and gannister beds,” may be examined by all. The brook course in Early Bank Wood reveals the various formations on the Cheshire side of the vale—really the commencement of the great Cheshire coal fields, which extend to Macclesfield. An out-crop of a similar character, the termination of the coal measures of South-east Lancashire, can be examined in the face of the hillside near Old St. George’s Church.

Thus, in the vale itself there may never have been more than two or three coal-pits, which were of no great depth, namely, the "Rabbit Holes," off High Street, and the "Ridge Hill;" yet within a short radius there exist, according to geological publications, nearly fifty seams of coal. These valuable deposits range in thickness from six feet to twelve inches, and make a total of 135 feet.

The eminent Dr. Charles Clay, M.R.C.S., published a book dealing with the geology of this district, perhaps one of the first volumes ever printed in Stalybridge, and which remains a monument to the well-remembered "Lowerth Davis."

In the pages of this rare volume will be found a tabulated list, showing the thickness and order of the various beds of rock, seams of coal, and shale formations.

At the beginning of last century the local coal-mine shafts were not more than from 60 to 105 yards in depth, depending on the bearing of the strata. The subsequent invention of the safety lamp by Davy—afterwards Sir Humphrey Davy—enabled the miners to descend and work the lower coal seams with less danger than hitherto.

In the year 1839, the period when Dr. Clay published his book, the formations of the earth's crust in this neighbourhood were known and named, to the depth of 1,256 yards, and it was from the miners and mining engineers who had been engaged in these dangerous, yet important, operations, that the physician-geologist obtained his facts.

The principal beds of rock through which the mine

shafts were sunk, at the cost of vast sums of money and great loss of life, comprised the following :—

		Yards Thick.			Yards Thick.
1	Bardsley .. ..	17	7	Black Rod .. ..	32
2	Park .. .. .	19	8	Upholland .. ..	15
3	Foxhole .. ..	14	9	Austerlands .. ..	34
4	Trencher Bone..	20	10	Haslingden .. ..	20
5	Edge Fold .. ..	22	11	Higher Mill Stone	30
6	New .. .. .	38			

Numerous other beds exist which Dr. Clay mentions and describes, with notes as to their various qualities.

In the countryside water courses and gullies, boulder stones are found, of almost every description of the older series of rocks, such as “granite, porphyry, limestone,” etc. Extensive layers of both the upper and the lower “boulder clays” exist, and furnished the supplies for the industry of brick making which was formerly carried on in the district. Fire-clay is to be found in abundance beneath the rugged slopes of Ridge Hill, with a trace of ironstone occasionally.

In various parts of the vale, “an immense deposit of sand presents itself, in some places fifteen yards thick, and is intersected by thick veins of silt or consolidated mud, having an appearance of being deposited at different periods; it appears also probable that the course of the River Tame, at some remote period, was more northward than at the present time, and these sand banks were produced on the original course of the river.”

Local geologists and practical miners who have spent their lives in the coal mines of this district are united

in their opinion that Stalybridge is situated on the site of what has been in ages past the field of "active volcanic movement and seismic upheaval," the evidence of which we are told "confronts us at every turn."

The fossil hunter may easily fill his wallet and enrich his collection by a visit to any of the local quarries or pit debris mounds, where choice specimens await his coming. Fern fronds, branches of trees, and beautiful shell forms exist in abundance. The magnificent collection of fossils which has been for years on exhibition in the Stamford Park Museum is well worth inspection and notice, and should be particularly interesting to the rising generation.

### THE RIVER TAME.

The River has been alluded to by a certain writer as the 'Parent of the Mersey.' Be that as it may, it cannot be denied that its waters, and the benefit to be derived from their use as a means of motive power, played a very important part in the birth and early days of the woollen and cotton industries of this district.

The River Tame rises in the range of hills which lie to the north of Saddleworth, and as we know it at Stalybridge is the joint flood of many mountain brooks and streams. The principal of these are the Chew and the Diggle, which join the Tame and lose their own names at the same time. The Saxons christened the Tame, the Diggle, and the Chew. The two latter have their sources in the hills north and south-east of Saddleworth, their waters being really the output of the springs in

the morasses and bogs of Featherbed Moss, Doveston Moss and Holme Moss. These extensive moorland tracts, solemn and grand in their undisturbed solitude, are almost without human inhabitants. Tenanted chiefly by game and wild fowl, they are seldom disturbed by the presence of mankind, save during the shooting season, or by the visit of some botanical devotee. It has been calculated that the Tame, the Diggle, and the Chew receive the drainage from lands having an area of fifty square miles. The waters of Carr Brook and Swineshaw Brook join in on the Cheshire side, whilst the streams of Stayley also help to swell the volume. In times past the Tame was subject to sudden floods, which caused great damage to property on its banks. The subsequent establishment of extensive reservoirs and waterworks has done much to check the rush of water from the steep hill sides. The vale of the Tame must have been at one time a veritable Paradise, and even to-day there are, in spite of the ravages of the necessary smoke and grime of our manufactories, many choice vistas of river-landscape to be seen by those who care for such pleasures. In the higher reaches of the tributary streams the scenery is grand and exceedingly impressive, solemn and sublime in its rugged weirdness. The mountaineering visitor may find, within a radius of a few miles, the undisturbed wilds which were the homes and haunts of men in prehistoric times.

The course of the River Tame is of a very winding nature, although in some places means have been used

to straighten it. Flowing through scenes of varied associations, after leaving Yorkshire it forms the dividing line between Lancashire and Cheshire.

Although the distance from Stockport, where it falls into the Mersey, to its source in the Yorkshire moors, would not be much more than twelve miles as the crow flies, yet, in consequence of the windings and turnings of its waters as it flows along, its real length is said to be nearly 40 miles.

Bare and cold as the out-cropping strata may appear to the bustling passer-by of to-day, dark and turbid as the waters of the Tame may be, the stony faces of rock and the inartistic bed of the river are still interesting to the geologist.

---

## Chapter 2.

In Prehistoric Times—Ancient British Footprints—Echoes from the mound of "Bucton"—Roman Traces.

"The past, be it remembered, is never found isolated in nature, but is interwoven inseparably with the present, thus forming a beacon flame for the future."

*Richard Wright Procter.*

**T**HE field for prehistoric research is ample and wide in the vicinity of Stalybridge. Although there is not much hope of finding antiquities in the heart of the town, the following recently came under the writer's notice.

Under the heading of "Prehistoric Man," in a very

embrasive article dealing with the known antiquities of Cheshire, bearing the date of 1906, it was interesting to read the following:—"The remains of early man appear to be scarce in this County, but one or two 'finds' have occurred. Of the Palæolithic, or Older Stone Age, no trace has been discovered in Cheshire."

Dealing with the "Neolithic, or Newer Stone Age," which came to an end in Britain about 2,000 B.C., the writer continues:—"Mr. C. E. de Rance records a quoit-shaped stone implement, about 6 inches in diameter, from drift 20 feet below the surface at Stalybridge Railway Station." This relic will probably be in the possession of one of the Cheshire Antiquarian Societies.

About the year 1882 a number of boys were playing in the vicinity of Sand Street, Stalybridge, when they found in a gully or drain a peculiar shaped stone. They began to use it as a quoit, when it occurred to a bystander that the stone might be worthy of preservation. Accordingly it was submitted to the notice of a local enthusiast, who pronounced it to be "the handiwork of man."

It proved to be the upper portion of a "quern," or hand-mill for grinding grain. It is now in the possession of a local gentleman who kindly lent it for inspection at the recent Jubilee Exhibition of 1907.

Entirely different from the British and Roman hand-mills found in the neighbouring vale of Longdendale, it may belong to the same period as the "find" previously mentioned.

The slopes and plateaux of the Pennine Range have long been the hunting grounds of devout and practical antiquarians. Their labours have been rewarded at intervals by the discovery of ancient relics and proofs of the occupation and existence of man at a remote period. Since the year 1901 a local antiquarian, Thomas Ashton, Esq., has obtained by diligent search a rare and choice collection of "Ancient British Flints," which are certainly amongst the oldest traces of man in this district. They were kindly lent for inspection, and were much noticed in the Jubilee Exhibition. These relics are in the form of flint chippings, scrapers, miniature spear points, and arrow heads, of which there are no less than twelve choice specimens. Antiquities such as these are ample proof of man's existence hereabouts, when the hill tops were the haunts of wild beasts, the hunting and slaying of which furnished the ancient Brigantes with food and garments.

The "grit-stone of which the hills mainly consist is not favourable for the preservation of animal remains," yet, under the peat of the moors, there may be preserved many relics of remote periods. It was the custom of the wild tribes who inhabited the local hills to cremate the bodies of their chieftains after death, placing the ashes inside an earthen vase, and burying the same in a stone-protected cavity, above which another large stone was placed for further protection.

Several of these burial urns have been found in recent years on the Pennine Range, within easy distance of



Bucton, and there is every reason to believe that such things exist in our own district.

The ancient Britons had a coinage of their own, a specimen of which, supposed to be the oldest known, bearing a date 200 B.C., is at the present time in the possession of Lord Avebury (Sir John Lubbock).

A valuable guide, in the shape of map and chart, has been drawn and compiled by Samuel Andrew, Esq., of Lees. It is entitled "Ancient British Footprints." It is of great service, as it defines the line of British connecting links in this district and also specifies the places where antiquities have been found.

It is recorded that on the summit of Wild Bank the practised eye of the antiquarian can discern Druidical signs and tokens, in the form of rudely cut stones, etc. In the vicinity of Ashton Hill Cross, Shaw Moor, and also near Shire Clough, Carr Brook, there are to-day large blocks of stone which appear to have been shaped and placed in their present positions by the hand of man.

Perhaps the grandest memorial existent is the ancient earth-built fort of Bucton. Bucton Castle, as it is known to the natives and dwellers in the vale, is possibly at the present time little more than a bleak moorland summit, rising to the height of 1,126 feet above the level of the sea. Bald and dun, scarred and swept by the cutting blasts so common to its vicinity, there still linger about its crest memories and traditions which many people will not willingly allow to be forgotten.

Its natural commanding situation lends itself at once to the supposition of its having been a military

stronghold in ages past, whilst as a site for a beacon light or a signalling station few places will bear comparison. Situated on the confines of four important counties—Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire—it forms a centre not to be ignored. Located directly in the line of route between Melandra, or Mouselow and Castleshaw, in Saddleworth, its importance in the days when the Roman generals inaugurated their military system must have been well considered. A reliable historian writes in 1776 as follows:—“The Romans did well to keep possession of these camps of one day’s march that they might, as soldiers on their motions, be sure of convenient lodging and other necessaries every night. . . . In case of an attack they could give notice to the neighbouring garrisons by means of beacons, and they were sure of immediate assistance.”

Butterworth, the local historian, who furnished much of the material and data found in the histories of this district, writes as follows:—“Bucton Castle, in Micklehurst, is situated on the north-western edge of the great moss called ‘Featherbed Moss,’ at about an equal distance between Mottram and Saddleworth. The castle is of an oval form, consisting of a rampart and a ditch, and stands on the summit of a high hill, very steep towards the west and south, commanding a view over the south part of Lancashire and the whole of Cheshire, and easterly to the West Nab in Yorkshire. Within the interior of the ditch, close by the rampart on the south, is a well, and opposite, on the south-west,

the ruins of a building are visible standing six or seven feet higher than the parade. The ditch is wanting on the west side, near which the country people dug in 1730 expecting to find treasure. The inner slope from the top of the rampart is 27 feet ; its perpendicular 6 feet ; outer slope, from the top of the rampart to the bottom of the ditch 35 feet ; inner slope of the ditch 16 feet ; depth of the ditch 8 feet ; width at the bottom 6 feet ; height of rampart above the level of the ground 8 feet ; breadth of gateway 16 feet ; the whole of the area within the ditch measuring 156 feet by 120. (See Percival MSS.)”

A very excellent engraved plan of the site of Bucton Castle may be seen in Aiken’s “Forty Miles Round Manchester.”

An account exists, written by Canon Raines, of an “accidental discovery about the year 1767 of a gold necklace and a silver vessel at the foot of the camp. The necklace consisted of 18 beads as large as a bullet, and a locket upon a chain ; it was sold for a guinea. The silver vessel would hold a quart ; it was sold for two shillings. A third silver article of less value was also found.”

It would be very interesting to know whether these articles are still in existence, and if so, where they are at the present time.

A well-known local worthy of the past has left behind him a description of a visit to Bucton and its memories, which is entitled to preservation :

“It was high noon when I found myself upon the

summit of 'Bucton,' which commands a full view of the fine valley that divides the counties of York, Chester, and Lancaster. I paused for a moment or two and endeavoured to throw my mind back to that period at which tradition says there stood upon the spot,—from which I gazed upon wild moors, green fields, and isolated dwellings—an ancient castle. I walked round and round, but in vain. I sought for its ruins; not a block of stone that seemed to have been used for that purpose was to be found, else there would have been some vestiges of its existence.

"Poets have immortalised it in song. J. C. Prince, on wending his way up the mountain side, exclaims:—

'Before me, single in his modest pride,  
Majestic Bucton swelleth towards the sky;  
His belt of dwarf oak reddening on his side,  
Flinging a flush of beauty on the eye.'

"Painters have sketched his fir-clad breast, and antiquarians have searched in vain for proofs of its existence; yet the neighbourhood is rife and ripe with traditionary tales of belted knights and fair dames, and of giants who fought for the nymphs of the valley.

"Many a legend still exists of the fairies who danced upon the beautiful table-land behind the castle walls, when the full moon threw her silvery rays athwart the winding Tame, which still flows as of old through the valley below. Some have held that it was a Roman station; others that it was a fort of the ancient Britons to keep in check the incursions of the Picts and Scots, for it is well known that after the Romans

had evacuated the country the Picts and Scots broke down the great wall which the Romans had erected, and ravaged the whole country as far as the county of Lancaster. The Britons, being reduced by distress and internal dissensions, Vortigern, the King, invited the Saxons to his assistance, and with the united forces drove the Picts and the Scots from the Kingdom. In a short time the tug of war began between the Saxons and the Britons, which resulted in the latter being totally defeated. The conquerors divided the country into seven kingdoms, which constituted the Heptarchy, and eventually resolved itself into the little kingdom of Angleland, or England, as the Saxons styled themselves Angles. The country was afterwards invaded by the Danes, who made themselves masters of the whole of Northumberland, as well as the principal parts of Durham and Yorkshire.

“In order to show that Bucton was a place of some importance at this period of time, an old manuscript, found in the archives of York, about the latter part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, says :—‘The Saxons had a station on the north-east boundary of Cheshire, where it meets and is bounded by Lancashire and Yorkshire.’

“This must be the vicinity of Bucton, for within half-a-mile of the foot of the mountain is the junction of the counties alluded to. It is further stated in the document that ‘about this time the valley was an impassable forest, from the head of Saddleworth to the neighbourhood of Stockport.’ And as the adjoining parts of Lancashire and Cheshire were covered with

swamps and lakes, it is probable that the Saxons were enabled to set the Danes at defiance for a considerable length of time ; but, ultimately, the Danes forced the Saxons from their stronghold in the mountains, and pushed their way through the Midland Counties as far as the Trent. 'Prior to this, the contending parties met on a plain at the foot of a neighbouring mountain,' so says the document alluded to (was this the battle of Allsmanheath ?) 'The contest was long and bloody, but the Saxons were ultimately routed, and fled in great disorder into the mountains of Wales.' This misfortune befel the Saxons in the reign of King Alfred, to whose goodness and wisdom we are indebted for many things which add to the comfort and happiness of the people of this realm. No stronger evidence of the existence of a castle upon the bleak mountain of Bucton can be adduced than that given above ; yet we may conclude with some degree of certainty that it was a strong military station in the dark ages, during the deadly struggles between the Picts and Scots, and also between the Danes and Saxons at a later period of English history."

There is little need for the fabrication and manufacture of prehistoric traces in this district, the ancient lines of road, which led the wild Picts and Scots to places where they could pillage and destroy, will even to this day serve to guide the seeker to out of the way spots where he may verify the facts for himself. To the thinking reader, in his moments of leisure, when the mind in its relaxation shall revert to the past, these gleanings may

serve to point the way, whereby, in memory, he can trace the footprints of half naked war-like Brigantes, or armed Roman Legions. He may wander along the indistinct, and stony avenues of crumbling antiquity until he becomes oblivious to the bustling present, and finds himself lost in the windings, twistings, and fascinations of the moss grown aisles of time.

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### Chapter 3.

Staveleigh and its Ancient Records—The Staveleigh Pedigree—The Legend of Roe-Cross—The Effigies of Sir Ralph de Stayley and his Lady—The Stayley Chapel in Mottram Church.

“I have endeavoured to blend the quick and the dead in this chronicle.”  
*Sylvan.*

**T**HE chronicler of events dealing with traditionary and legendary history is entirely dependent on the accounts written by bygone scribes, which, having survived the stormy times of the Cromwellian period, are left as literary legacies to posterity. From a number of these ancient records a selection has been made for this chapter.

#### THE STAVELEIGH PEDIGREE.

The following is copied from Butterworth's History of this neighbourhood, published in 1823, page 124 :

“ The following may be illustrative of the antiquity of Staley-Bridge, and the ancient family of the Staveleys, who once occupied Stealey Hall, in the sixteenth year of Edward the Third.

“ Robert de Staveley *vel* Staveleigh married one Dyonyssia, and held Staveley from the Lord of Mottram, but the superior Lords were the Macclesfields. Oliver de Staveleigh, his successor, married Johanna (or Joan) daughter of Hamond Fitton, of Bollin, and widow of Richard Venables. He was patron of the Church of Thornton-le-Moors in right of his wife.

“ The direct male line of the Staveleighs continued here until Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Ralph Staveleigh, married Thomas, son and heir of John de Assheton; which Thomas and Elizabeth, 10th of Edward 4th, passed a fine of the said manor and land and messuages therein, settling the same on themselves and the heirs of the said Elizabeth. Thomas Assheton, last male heir of the eldest branch of the ancient family of Assheton, of Ashton-under-Lyne, was knighted at Rippon 7th, of Henry the 7th, and is supposed to have contributed largely towards rebuilding the Church of Ashton-under-Lyne, on the steeple of which is the coat of arms of Assheton (argent, a mullet, sable) impaling that of his first wife, Elizabeth Staveleigh. He died about the 8th year of Henry the 7th, leaving a daughter by his second wife, Agnes Harrington, of Westby; and by his first wife he had issue, Margaret, wife of William Booth, of Dunham Massey, and



Elizabeth, wife of Randle Assheton, who died without issue. By Inq. P.M. 2nd of Elizabeth; Elizabeth Assheton, widow, held lands in Staveley and Godeley, and 11d. rent therein in soccage from the Queen (by reason of the forfeiture of Francis, Lord Lovell) by the render of 1d. value xxix̄ xs. xd., of William Booth, great-grandson of her sister, Margaret Booth, next of kin and heir.

“George Booth, son of the said Margaret, by inquisition, 23rd of Henry VIII., had previously died, seized of other lands in Mattely, Godeley, and Styall, held as above, value 28̄ 13s. 4d.

“From this family Stayley has passed, with other estates of the Booth's, to the present Earl of Stamford, who holds a Court Baron for the same. The township is also subject to the Leet of Mottram.”

### THE STAVELEIGH TRADITION.

There are many and various settings of the legend or tradition of Staveleigh, the best to the writer's thinking being the version given by our local historian, Butterworth, in his book published in 1827, from which we quote the following:—

“In the south aisle of the chancel of this (Mottram) Church, which belongs to the Earl of Stamford as representative of the Stayleys, is the monument of a knight and his lady, without arms or inscription, most probably (says Lyson) one of the family of Staveleigh, or Stayley, which became extinct in the reign of Edward the Fourth. The current tradition of the place for the

last two centuries respecting this rude monument has been that it is the monument of the Rowes of Stayley, but it does not appear that the family of Roe had any connection with Stayley, which passed by a female heir to the Asshetons and then to the Booths. It is known that there is still in existence a society, who, though the order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, or Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, are abolished, still meet in private, keeping up the insignia and some of the rules observed by this order of Crusaders, in what they denominate a conclave. It is also known that the Knight represented in the monument we are now speaking of has certain 'insignia' belonging thereto that denominates the person to have been a Knight Crusader. This order are in possession of the following tradition, which has been handed down to the present members, respecting this knight and his lady. Sir Ralph Staveleigh, in the time of Richard the First, accompanied that monarch to the war, generally denominated the Holy War (which that monarch waged to the impoverishment of England and the loss of the flower of the British youth), and in that foolish contest with the Saracens for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, Sir Ralph, aforesaid, was taken prisoner and confined in Syria for many years, but suffered at last, on his parole of honour, to return to his native land in order to raise a certain sum on his estates or otherwise as his ransom.

“ Travelling in disguise (it being thought so dishonourable to return from so sacred a war, in any

otherwise than what is termed an heroic manner) he arrived at a place near his former habitation, where two roads traversed each other. At this place he was met by an old domestic, accompanied by a dog, which had long been a domesticated animal. The dog was the first of the two to recognise its former master, and by its barking and fawning manner brought the attention of the servant to survey the pilgrim, who, on close attention, he perceived also was his former master.

“An explanation followed, the servant informing him that Lady Staveleigh was the very day following going to be married to another man. This was indeed a *cross*, and demanded a symbol to denote the same, which was subsequently erected by the Knight.

“He was, however, determined to see his Lady, prior to the second engagement.

“He proceeded therefore forward to the ancient mansion of the Staveleighs (the very site of the modern one) and desired to see Lady Staveleigh.

“He was told, however, it was impossible, as she was in preparation for her nuptials the following day, and could not be seen by any other man but her intended bridegroom. He begged, however, to be refreshed with a cup of metheglin. This was granted, and when he had finished the same he dropped a private ring into the bottom of the vessel and desired the servant maid to deliver the cup and ring to her lady.

“Upon Lady Staveleigh examining the ring, she exclaimed whoever was the bearer thereof must be either Sir Ralph Staveleigh or some messenger from

him. But, added she, if it be really Sir Ralph himself, he is acquainted with a certain mark or mole upon me in a concealed part that none but himself knows of. The Knight returned an answer by the servant which convinced Lady Staveleigh that it was Sir Ralph himself. The joy on his return may be better conceived than described, and a memorial of his return has ever since been preserved where those roads crossed each other, at the identical place where the favourite dog and the old domestic met their returning long lost master.

‘But oh! What joy, what mighty ecstasy,  
Possess’d her soul at this discovery!  
Speechless and panting at his feet she lay,  
And short-breath’d sighs told what she could not say.  
Nine thousand times his hands she kissed and pres’t,  
And look’d such darts as none could ere resist.  
Silent they gazed, his eyes met hers with tears  
Of joy—while love and shame suffused hers.’

“I have seen this account in manuscript belonging to Sir Joseph Radcliffe, of Mills Bridge, near Huddersfield, wrote, I believe, by the hand of Thomas Percival, Esq., of Royton, and this account also, with some variations, has been subsequently communicated to me by a friend connected with the late Mr. Meredith, of Liverpool, who belonged, when living, to the Order of the Conclave before-mentioned, and was, when living, one of the finest antiquaries of his time as a country man.”

So much, therefore, for the tradition of the ancient monument in Mottram Church according to Butterworth.

It has been the privilege of the writer to see and examine a number of these ancient effigies in various parts of the country. Local antiquaries have expressed the opinion that the Stayley monument must have originally been placed in the ancient grave-yard, and that it received periodical coatings of whitewash, which formed a crust upon its surface. The exposure of the old monument to the searching atmospheric effects which are to be encountered in the bleak church-yard would not add to the preservation of the historic relic.

We can look upon the stony figures as they appear weird and silent in the dim religious light, and our minds are carried back to the times of "Chivalrous Knights in armour bright." But alas! the dust of those knights may even now be mingling with that of their vassals and serfs in the silent church-yard without.

### THE STAVELEIGH CHAPEL.

The ancient chapel of the Staveleigh family still exists in Mottram Church, and is dealt with by a reliable writer as follows:—

"The south chapel, formerly attached to the manor of Stayley, is now the property of the trustees of the late Edward Chapman, Esq., having been acquired by the late John Chapman, Esq., about 1860, and has since been restored and inclosed with oak screen-work. In this chapel, against the wall, is an altar tomb with recumbent effigies of a Knight and Lady representing

Sir Ralph de Staveley, or Staley, temp. Hen. IV., and his wife. The figure of the knight is in plate armour, with a conical bascinet, and his wife is attired in a high collared gown with sleeves; both wear collars of SS, and at their feet are dogs."

The collar badges of SS, referred to above, were introduced by Henry IV., and are believed to be the initial letters of his motto "Soveraygne."

The gem of Mottram Church from the antiquarian's point of view is undoubtedly the ancient Norman Font now placed near the South door. It is the only relic we possess of the Church which existed on this site in 1291, and it has brought to Mottram many enthusiasts from all parts of the country, who find an excellent and ever willing guide in the person of the present Vicar, the Rev. W. A. Pemberton, M.A.

Various traditionary and legendary tales have been written in connection with the ancient monuments mentioned, and it is with mixed feelings that the pilgrim to Mottram Church, after treading the aisle, peers through the screen at the motionless representatives of "Old Ro and his wife."

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### Chapter 4.

Early Records of the Vale—Robertus de Rasbotham—John of Heghrode—Flaxfield—Clearance of Timber—Staley-Wood.

"Fortunately we have friends in the antiquarian court."

*Richard Wright Procter.*

**THE** earliest records of the Vale of Staley are inseparable from the names of Sir Ralph de

Stayley, Robert de Hough, John del Heghrode, and Robertus de Rasbotham.

Fortunately there is in existence the ancient rent roll, or a copy thereof, of Sir John de Assheton, dated 1422, in the reign of Henry VI.

From this record we find the names of Rasbotham, Heghrode, Arles, and Woodfield existed four hundred and eighty-five years ago.

Not only are the names of the various tenants given, but also the acreage and amount of money, or service required for the use and possession of the land per annum. A table of comparison in the value of money then and now would be interesting. We quote from the records as under :—

Robert of the Rasbotham, for the Rasbotham	-	0	5
William of the Woodfield, for the Erles (Arlies)	-	4	0
John of Heyrode, for an intake at Bastall	-	2	0
The same John, for William Ffield	-	10	0
John of Heyrode, for his tenement	-	7	1
The Heir of Thomas of Staveley, for the Bastal	-	2	1
The same Heir of Staveley, and the Heir of Thomas of Trafford, and others, for Assheton Lands and Palden Woods	-	-	4 0

Nearly two hundred years after, viz., 1618, there was “an assessment lay’d and appointed in the fifteenth year of the reign of James the First.” Under the heading of “Hartshead” there are several items connected with this district, and one in particular is interesting since we have known the direct descendants of the tenant named,

Nicholas Lilley, 18 acres	}	0 3d.
More in Common, 6		

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the occupation of the people, in addition to agriculture, was flax dressing, and as Ashton-under-Lyne was a centre or market for flax dealing, it must have been an important industry. The name of Flax-field is familiar, and occasionally the delicate bloom of a little plant has been gathered in the pastures near the farmstead, which botanists have pronounced to be the flower of the flax.

The Vale of Staley is described by one historian as "The native place of the prime oak, towering on high ; the stately monarch of the forest, lofty as the taper pine, 'fit for the mast of some great admiral,' or, rather destined for ribs to bear on the broad and magnificent bosom of the ocean the British thunder in after ages. These stately monarchs overspread this part of the country."

A description of the vale in 1785 simplifies the meaning of the term Staley-Wood :

"Such was the beautiful scenery of this valley in the spring and summer months, that it quite astonished the visitor, or well-informed stranger. . . . For many years nature had been very lavish in adorning and beautifying the Vale. The fine hedgerows and lofty timber in the woods, with underwood of holly, hazel, crab and blackberry, were tenanted by the hare, wood fox, and squirrel, and at certain times of the year with flocks of stock-doves and birds of prey. . . . Within a period of 18 years (1784-1802) there have been three heavy falls of timber on the Earl of Stamford's



estâtes in the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne and the townships of Stayley, Matley, and Hattersley. The last great fall was about the year 1802, and in the spring of that year the greatest part of the timber was cleared away and sent to Liverpool for shipbuilding purposes. . . . It was calculated that the Earl would make 'the amazing sum of £70,000 from the produce of that sale!'"

Shortly after this clearance of timber the explorer, John Bradbury, visited his old home at Souracre, and he is said to have complained of the spoliation of the forest, remarking "that had it not been for the shape of the hills he would scarcely have known the place where he was born."

Eighty years ago (1827), the description published of Staley-Wood is as follows:—

"The wood between Mossley and Staleybridge, the sylvan beauty of which renders truly romantic Scout Mill, Heyrod Hall and parts adjacent, is also worthy of particular notice."

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## Chapter 5.

The Old Halls and Folds—Stayley Hall—Heyrod Hall—Castle Hall—Hollins Hall—Gorse Hall—Harridge Hall.

"When we pine for a missing link of any description, we have only to seek and we shall find; but we must delve deeply into the sand which the great Traveller sheds from his hour-glass."

*Richard Wright Procter.*

### STAYLEY HALL.

**T**HE ancient home of the Staveleighs is the oldest structure in the vicinity. It has been claimed that

its date of erection was the middle part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, A.D. 1580. A well-known local enthusiast in antiquarian matters, however, fixes its date as the latter part of the reign of Charles I., or the early years of the sovereignty of Charles II. One thing is certain, that the present building stands on a site previously used, and moreover contains in its construction much material which has seen service in some earlier building or buildings previous to the erection of the present one.

In Aiken's "History of the Country Forty Miles Round Manchester," there is a very fine engraving from a painting evidently executed about 1793. Little change is apparent to-day, save that the foliage depicted in the rear of the building has passed away, to its detriment in an artistic sense.

The additional modern farm buildings call for little attention, the interest historically being in the old Hall itself. The frontage is characteristic of the days of the Cavaliers and Roundheads, its formation being somewhat remarkable in the possession of five gables.

Perhaps the best description that ever came before our notice is the one from which the following extract is taken.

"The Hall is built of stone parpoints, or flag stones, quoined with tooled ashlar at the angles, and covered with grit-slate or shingles. . . . The mouldings of the string cornice supporting the roof date back to the early part of the seventeenth century. . . . The southern front, the one now under notice, comprises

five gabled bays, the centre one deeply recessed, whilst the adjoining ones on each side are somewhat advanced, and lineable with each other. . . . The eaves somewhat project beyond the walls; but gone are the barge boards and the gable finals, once doubtless ornamenting the structure. With three exceptions, which will be noticed, there is one window, and no more, in each storey of every bay. . . . The windows are destitute of transoms, but are divided into several lights by strong mullions with hollow mouldings.

“The centre bay displays a window of four lights on the ground storey, a similar one in the next, and one of two divisions in the uppermost.

“In the bay to the east of it the two lower storeys have windows of three lights each, with an ‘owl hole’ in the third, and a sub-entrance in its western face. . . . The corresponding bay on the opposite side of the centre part is similarly treated in the upper storeys, but in the lower one is dignified with the principal entrance door under a capacious archway. The two extreme bays have each five light windows in the two lower storeys, and two light ones in the highest apartments. The main entrance door is massive in size, and made of stout oaken planks, with ribs placed over the joints, in order to keep out the cold and add to the ornament imparted by clout-headed nails driven in rows placed in diagonal style.” Such then is a quotation from a description of the ancient building, written more than a generation ago, unquestionably

by a person of experience and talent. In proof of the statement and belief of the existence of earlier buildings on the same site, we submit the following gleaning :—

“Whilst examining the left wing, it was quite apparent that a considerable number of joists had previously done duty in some other building, probably the predecessor of the present one, and had formed portions of the framework of some internal partition, or ‘twining,’ or division wall. This was clear enough from one side having the usual triangular grooving, and the other the shallow holes in which the railings and wicker-work were fixed previous to filling up with daub or clay plaster.

“The roof of this gable is divided into four bays by three trusses. The principals of two of these trusses are ornamented with rude angular mouldings, and morticed for the reception of braces, which have once formed a semi-circular or pointed arch within the principals. It is quite evident that these timbers have once figured as the roof-timbers of the Great Hall, in a much more ancient structure than the present one. The braces, which imparted an ornamental character to them, have been cut out, as they would have been in the way when placed in their present position.”

On the strength of the belief of bygone antiquarians, who it appears thoroughly overhauled the ancient place, it would appear that when the splendour of Stayley Hall as a family residence declined, it fell into disuse, and many of its apartments became unnecessary. The

result was that the occupiers from time to time made free use of the old oaken panelling and partitions—even of the room floorings—for fuel or other purposes. That such a course of proceedings was vandalism, in the eyes of all lovers of the antique, is but a mild way of expressing it. Again, the effect of time, atmosphere, and the weather generally leaves inevitable imprints, the more so in cases like that of Stayley Hall, for standing as it does in a bleak position exposed and unsheltered, it must have borne the brunt of a thousand storms and tempests.

The site has been compared with that of the Roman fort “Melandra,” in the Vale of Longdendale, and there is a certain amount of similarity in their respective positions.

Stayley Hall crowns a huge mound of natural formation, three of its sides shaped like a strong “bastion,” whilst the fourth could have easily been protected and guarded, at short notice, by a ditch or moat. It is quite within the range of possibility that the spot was selected by the warriors of old on account of its many advantages in a military sense.

The requirements of the people in modern times have resulted in great changes, naturally and commercially, and the days of “chivalry” are now things of the past.

Millbrook, marked on the old maps of the eighteenth century as Stayley Mill, may owe its name to the fact that an ancient corn mill stood by the streamlet’s side, at which the tenants and servants would grind their

corn, according to the custom of the Manor. The local names, Flax-field, Swineshaw, Cops-field, Crows-i'th'-Wood, and Ditch-Croft, all seem to savour somewhat of the days of long ago. Before quitting the subject, it may be of interest to refer to the origin and reason for the "owl holes" mentioned in this article. Long years ago, corn was very extensively grown in this neighbourhood, and stored in the capacious granaries and barns, until required. As a natural result, hosts of field mice and swarms of barn rats made serious inroads on the farmers' stock.

John Bull, however, was alive to the fact that the pest had its remedy in the sense that the common owl is the natural enemy of all four-footed vermin. Thus it came about that owls were encouraged about the old farmsteads; and means of ingress and egress made for their special convenience. Under the protection of the farmer, owls became almost domesticated, and formed a necessary part of the homestead's live-stock. Several breeds of owls were known to exist in this district thirty years ago, and within the last three years a fine male specimen of the horned owl was shot on the banks of the Tame.

### HEYROD HALL.

The historian Butterworth refers to Heyrod Hall as follows:—"Heyrod Hall, now in the occupation of Messrs. Lawton and Shelmerdine, is an ancient estate situated to the N.E. of Staley-Bridge, on the border of the Tame; on the front of the hall are the following

initials and date, 'R.W., 1638.' In the first year of the reign of Henry VI. (1422) it appears to have belonged to John del Heyrod, paying something to the Lord of the Manor, Sir John de Assheton, after which date it passed into the family of the 'Dukinfields of Dukinfield,' and was purchased from them by the family of Shelmerdine, who have resided there one hundred and fifty years." The Old Hall was demolished about 1845.

"There is a woollen mill situated on this estate belonging to Messrs. Lawton and Shelmerdine, remarkable as one of the only two in the parish of Ashton (1823)."

Shortly after the foregoing was written Heyrod Hall Estate passed into the possession of the Ouseys. When the railway was constructed through the estate, about 1843, the company bought it, and afterwards, on the completion of the line, sold it back to the original owners.

### GORSE HALL.

Gorse Hall, which gives the name to the estate long connected with the family of the "Leech's," and now in the occupation of G. H. Storrs, Esq., is said to have been so-called from the abundance of gorse which formerly grew on the hill slopes thereabouts. The mansion known as Gorse Hall was erected by John Leech, Esq., but the ancient or Old Gorse Hall, which is now used as cottages, belongs to a bygone period of which we have been unable to find the date.

## HARRIDGE HALL.

Harridge Hall is a building of the type now fast disappearing, and is situated on the line of the old Roman road on the fringe of Harridge Moor, near Carr Brook, and is marked on the ordnance maps.

## CASTLE HALL FARM.

Probably the oldest building in the town of Stalybridge is the ancient structure near the Central Co-operative Stores, in Grosvenor Street. Its venerable and old-time appearance has often commanded the attention of local antiquarians. The land in front, now a portion of Grosvenor Street, is marked on the old deeds as "Barn Meadow."

## CASTLE HALL.

Castle Hall, from whence the district so-called, of Stalybridge, takes its name, is still remembered by some of the aged residents. It is referred to by the historian Butterworth in his book, published 1823, p. 124, as follows:—"The house occupied at present by Mr. Lees at Staley-Bridge; . . . its former name they say was Castle-Hill, it is seated on the top of a steep rock, on the Cheshire side, impending over the River Tame, which forms a sort of natural cascade as it falls from the detached and broken rocks beneath.

"The present house alluded to, they say, was built by William Dukinfield, and re-sold to a Mr. Kenworthy, but is now the property of a Mr. Lees."



William Dukinfield died in 1735, and there is on the south side of the Old Chapel, Dukinfield, a fine altar-tomb erected to his memory, with a suitable inscription. Tradition says that William Dukinfield erected his mansion on the site of a still earlier residence.

The following description of the old Hall is preserved : " Castle Hall, a building which stood close to the river's edge, on a site near the present Market Hall. It was a castellated mansion, and its turret will always have an abiding recollection for me. The style of architecture was Elizabethan, although not quite correct in all its details. It had a comfortable and handsome appearance, and, standing as it did in a comparatively secluded spot, it gave one the impression of a substantial and at the same time cosy home." Castle Hall was demolished in 1861.

### HOLLINS OLD HALL.

Hollins Old Hall was part of the residence of the late Mr. Stephens, and formed the kitchen premises, " Prior to its renovation this old building was overhauled and unroofed. Under the grey flag-slates was found a mixture of clay, chopped straw, etc., several inches in thickness, and on its removal the rafters, which were of sound oak, were exposed. The walls were formed of massive beams, morticed and jointed. Stout pegs were driven through the tenons. Long sticks or branches of ash were fixed into the spaces, and these were again crossed by others, forming a crate-like frame. These were filled in with raddle and daub, and this completed

the walls of the house. It would appear that Hollins Hall owes its origin to the days of the half-timbered erections. Up to the period of 1850 a very fine yew tree flourished in the garden of Hollins Hall ; it was, however, cut down, and the timber was found to be in excellent condition, although there is no telling how old the tree was."

The ancient building still exists, and is worth the notice of the lover of old-time memorials.

### THE OLD FOLDS.

After the Restoration of Charles II., when the sounds of strife had ceased and peace had become permanent, the daring spirits who had been busy either with the Cavaliers or the Roundheads as soldiers, found themselves without occupation. Tradition says that from this source there originated gangs of freebooters, bold, hardy fellows, who thought little of the eighth commandment, and who had few scruples as to whose cattle, sheep, or horses they confiscated—"all was fish that came to their net." The farmers of that period believed in the adage "Prevention is better than cure," and in order to protect their livestock, as well as for their own safety, they erected strong and substantial buildings, which were called "Folds," usually having the name of their owner prefixed. Generally there was a house for the master, with cottages for the dependants, and housings, barns, and shippens for the stock. There are still several fine examples of these venerable strongholds in the neighbourhood. It was the custom at this period

for the male members of the family to sleep with fire-arms or other weapons of defence underneath their pillows.

The principal folds in this district, some of which have been demolished, were as follows :—Lilley Fold, Ridge Hill Lane, (1625) demolished ; Higher Fold, a fine stone house with mullioned windows, entrance hall, and “owl-holes,” dated 1700, demolished 1902 ; Flatt’s Fold, Cock Brook, site of Tennis Ground, demolished about 1880 ; Hyde’s Fold, demolished for the erection of Town Hall 1829 ; Sidebottom Fold, shown on old maps of 1794 ; Bradley Fold, Huddersfield Road ; Kinder Fold, Mottram Old Road ; Heyrod Fold, Heyrod ; Souracre Fold, Far Souracre ; Higham Fold, Park Hall ; Bower Fold, Mottram Road, and others. The fine old home-  
stead, The Ashes, Mottram Old Road, is veritably the last of its kind in this district ; it was built in the troublous times of the early part of the eighteenth century, and there is a local tradition connecting it with the Scotch Rebellion.

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## Chapter 6.

"The Old Bridle-paths—The Roman Roads—The King's Highway—The Turnpike Road—Toll-bars—The old River Ford—The First Bridge—Present Bridges.

"The thoroughfares or byways outlined upon our primitive maps, or described in our earliest chronicles, are landmarks to the historical student."

*Sylvan.*

ACCORDING to the historian Whittaker, we learn that "a Roman Station was fixed at Stockport, and that a branch of road therefrom extended into the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, near the foot of Staley-Bridge, which was the third road from the said station, and is denominated Staley Street for a mile together." Staley Street to-day commences near the Glent Quarry, Wakefield Road, and leads to the top of Ridge Hill. The upper surface of the out-cropping rock forms the floor of the road in a great many places. It is interesting to look across the vale from the elevation of Early Bank Road or from Mottram Old Road, and *vice versa*. There have been found traces of Roman roads on the Dukinfield estate at various times, and local antiquarians believe that a Roman road came from the direction of Dukinfield Old Hall towards Stalybridge, as if to form a connection with the old road known as Ridge Hill Lane, which is said to commence really near the Bridge Inn, Water Road. The Roman road from Werneth Low, which passes through Hattersley and Matley, and along the western slope of Harrop Edge, joins the ancient road from Melandra Castle, near the deep cutting.

From thence it passes on to Gallows Clough, where traces may be seen of a very ancient road now in disuse. Gallows Clough is situated at four road ends. The Roman road at this place leads close to the edge of the moorland. Mottram Old Road is the ancient track which winds down to the former river ford at Portland Place. One reason given for the construction of the line of road along the moor edge is that it was above the line of timber-growth, and in the far-off times, when the roads were made, the vale would, it is assumed, be a dense forest of thick underwood and massive trees, the sheltering place and abode of wild beasts and wilder men. The Roman soldiers made their roads where they would not become choked with trees and vegetation, a fact which is soon apparent on visiting any place where vestiges of their work are to be seen.

The eye of the antiquarian soon detects the signs of old roadways, and if a map were prepared of the country about Stalybridge dealing with the old bridle-paths and pack-horse roads, it would be invaluable and interesting.

To-day the roads as used in bygone times are of little service, except now and then to trace out some demolished hill-side homestead. A very ancient road leading from Mouselow to Bucton may be traced by the indent in the purple ridge of the moor as it shows against the sky-line when looking north-west from Hadfield or Padfield. Many of these points and facts were shown to the writer by the late Isaac Watt Boulton, Esq., who was one of the best local topographers of his day and generation. The old roads left by the Romans

remained the principal arteries of traffic until the reign of Queen Anne. Little was done in the shape of repair except when the King and his retinue passed through the district. Upon such occasions the route taken would be put in order, the ruts levelled, and the brush-wood or timber cleared. The ancient fords and bridges would be made passable, thus obtaining for the roads receiving attention the title of the "King's Highway."

About the year 1700 attempts were made to improve the roads, but it was not until near the end of the century that Parliament tackled the question. Subsequently Acts were passed by the Government for the making of new roads, and the diverting and mending of old ones. District trusts were formed, with powers to erect gates and barriers, and to take toll from persons using such roads ; this was the inauguration of the "Turnpike Roads." Highway Acts came into operation authorising parishes and townships to appoint surveyors, whose duties included the supervision of the construction of the roads, and the collection in their respective districts of the rates and taxes. Counties and hundreds had the power to erect bridges over the rivers, where needful. The improvement of the roads enabled the pack-saddle and pillion to be discarded, and the stage-coach, with its postillion, guard, and driver appeared. We have no authentic record of highwaymen and their exploits in this locality, although the loneliness of the outskirts might have aided their schemes. The name of "Gallows Clough" is suggestive enough, coupled with its location. The well-remembered "Toll-bars" of Heyrod, Copley

and the "Sand Mill" at the Deep Cutting have disappeared in our own time, though the houses of the gatekeepers at Heyrod and Copley still exist.

The oldest turnpike road in this district is inferred to be that now known as Huddersfield Road. According to Aiken it was being completed, or had just been completed, at the time when his book was in the press, 1793.

Quoting from a newspaper cutting dated 1862-3, we have the following interesting statement:—"Eighty years ago, and within my own recollection, the roads from Manchester, Ashton, Stockport, etc., were in the most wretched condition. Over the ranges of the hills to the south-western counties, the transit of goods between this county and those districts was by pack-horse. I can well remember one gang of pack-horses passing through this village (Stalybridge) to south Yorkshire, Nottingham, and Lincoln. To the best of my recollection this was eighty years ago this last summer. As I advanced in years I was often told that this was the last gang that passed this way. The roads began to be improved, and stage waggons and carts for the purpose of sending goods to Lancashire and Cumberland and the eastern counties took the place of pack-horses. A coach road was made in the latter part of the 18th or very early years of the 19th century, from the junction of Old Mottram Road and the present Mottram Road. This road came through the lands now forming the "Woodlands" and "Foxhill" estates. A portion of the old road is still discernable as the pedestrian

ascends Mottram Road, a little way above the "Woodlands."

The "Deep Cutting" was made when the Manchester and Saltersbrook turnpike road was formed, and was completed about the year 1825-6, and it is said occupied about 12 years in its construction.

### THE BRIDGES.

The River Bridge at Portland Place is the third of which there is any record.

The ancient road through the village crossed the river at this place as a ford, the remains of its approach may be seen on the Lancashire side. Old residents speak of its having been paved; be that as it may, soon after the year 1600, a bridge was erected, which gave to the village the name of Staley-bridge.

In 1707 a very substantial erection of two arches was built by the land owners on either side of the stream, the date stone, with their initials or those of their predecessors being fixed in the pillar near the iron palisades. This stone forms part of the present structure on the Cheshire side.

About the year 1787 a bridge was erected by Mr. Astley, near the Bridge Inn, and was in existence until about 1845, when the iron-sided bridge of our own time replaced it. The present bridge at this place is the third.

The iron bridge in Melbourne Street was erected about 1834, but only as a roadway for vehicles, the



footpaths were added later. About 1865 the bridge was altered and improved to its present state.

Victoria Bridge was first erected in 1869, and has since been improved.

Bayley Street Bridge was built in 1854, in connection with the new line of road to Ashton.

Flatt's Bridge replaced a primitive structure which was washed away by a flood.

The wooden bridge at Crookbottom is a private one, as is also the bridge at North End ; another bridge of this class formerly existed near the paper mill.





## PART II.

### EARLY INDUSTRIES.

#### Chapter 1.

The Advent of Mechanical Industry—The Old Hand-Loom and the Single-Spindle—List of Farmers, Weavers, and Residents 1770

“ It is not in the dis-interment of facts, but in the manner in which they take life and colour that originality exists.”

*Bulwer Lytton.*

**I**N the year 1700, a cottage in the village with a convenient loom-house, and a small garden in which there could be grown vegetables, etc., sufficient for a family, could be had at a rental of one and a half or two guineas per annum.

Wool-weaving and farming were carried on conjointly, the farm receiving attention when necessary, the remaining portion of the time being utilised in the loom-house.

The average earnings of a weaver-farmer, apart from the income from his farming, varied from 8s. to 10s. 6d. per week, whilst his sons, under his supervision and guidance, could earn from 6s. to 8s. per week.

The wives and daughters were employed on the hand-spinning wheel, by which process the work for one weaver

required the services of six or eight spinners, thus a great number of persons were requisite to keep up a supply of yarn.

Spinning by this means was not a hard or laborious occupation, so that the aged people, whose eyesight and faculties remained unimpaired, were enabled to earn sufficient for their wants.

The high three-storeyed buildings so familiar, even to-day, on the outskirts of the town were built for the purpose of woollen manufacture, frequently with a staircase, or steps, outside the main building. Often enough a farmer would have four or more looms in his house, whilst others, who found occupation for their neighbours, had as many as a dozen. The scarcity of yarn would occasionally make it necessary for the weaver to walk several miles, from cottage to cottage, collecting his supply for the day's work.

The fly-shuttle was now becoming known in the district, the invention of John Kay, of Bury, who, by his genius, solved a problem which had puzzled the brain of man for ages, and who, as a reward for his ingenuity, was allowed in after years to die in poverty and obscurity in a foreign land. Kay's invention enabled the hand-loom weaver to earn double the wages he had been getting when the shuttle was thrown by hand through the meshes of the texture from one side of the loom to the other. The cloth was better, the labour lighter. Then came the invention of the "eight-handed spinster"; a better supply of weft immediately followed, with increased profit for the weaver.

At this period, 1770, weavers were happy men, and as a consequence of their prosperity hand-loom were erected in almost every home in the district.

The price for weaving a piece of cloth 24 yards long was about four guineas.

The weavers of Stalybridge "were gentlemen, wore top boots, ruffled shirts, and carried canes when they walked abroad. They became a class of themselves, met in the village Inn, smoked none but churchwarden pipes, and excluded from their presence and company the society of other workmen."

The following list has been compiled from various sources, parish registers, family documents, etc., and may be relied upon as representative of the names of the heads of the families who lived in the vale of Stayley in the year 1770.

The names of many well-known local families will be noticed, and there will doubtless be a large number omitted, as the list is far from being complete.

Instead of being the unimportant place which it appears to have been considered by some writers, Stalybridge must have been a typically prosperous Lancashire village:—

Adshead Edward	Booth Thomas	Cook Joseph
Ainsworth George	Buckley John	Cook James
Antrobus John	Buckley Benjamin	Cook John
Bates Samuel	Buckley James	Cook Abraham
Bardsley Jonas	Buckley Joshua	Cocker John
Bradbury Edward	Cheetham Elijah	Crabtree John
Booth Edward	Cook Samuel	Dean Samuel

Dewsnap James	Kenworthy Wm.	Miller Isaac
Evans Rev. Thomas	Kenworthy James	Ogden James
Ellison Robert	Kenworthy John	Orrell John
Gatlay John	Kershaw Hugh	Ousey James
Hadfield John	Kinder Samuel	Ousey John
Hadfield Robert	Kinder John	Platt Absalom
Hague John	Kinder James	Saxon Samuel
Hall James	Knight George	Shelmerdine James
Hall Joseph	Knight William	Shepley Thomas
Hall Neddy	Knott Jonas	Sidebottom Thos.
Hampson Thomas	Lawton Jarvis	Slater Joseph
Heap Robert	Lawton John	Slade Abel
Heginbotham Jas.	Lees Henry	Stansfield John
Hilton Edward	Lees Thomas	Swanwick Philip
Hilton Jeffrey	Lilley John	Robinson William
Holden John	Lilley Nicholas	Taylor John
Hollinworth John	Lingard Joshua	Taylor William
Howard John	Marsland Daniel	Walker John
Howard William	Marsland Samuel	Walton Isaac
Hyde Jonathan	Marvel John	Whitehead Robert
Hyde Thomas	Mellor John	Worthington Ralph
Judson Randle		

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## Chapter 2.

The Introduction of Motive Power—The Dog-wheel—The Horse-gin—The Water-wheel—The Steam Engine.

“Facts are open to all men. They are the brick-earth upon the common-land, from which, by right immemorial, each man may build his castle or his cottage.”

*Bulwer Lytton.*

A WRITER of the latter part of the eighteenth century, referring to Stalybridge, says “the place was famous for a great length of time for weavers, dyers, and pressers of woollen cloth. These branches flourished in the commencement of the present century (1700), so that here was the western verge of the woollen manufacture, which extended through the vales of the Tame and the Etherow. In 1748 the principal employment of the inhabitants was the spinning of worsted yarn for the Nottingham hosiers, but the cotton trade existed in a slight degree in its domestic stage. At this time, a single dyer monopolised all the trade in his line with the aid of two mastiff dogs, who were made to grind the wares by turning a sort of canine tread mill, similar in construction to those in which squirrels are sometimes placed, and to which a piece of grinding machinery was attached. At the period alluded to, the number of houses was about fifty-four, and the inhabitants amounted to one hundred and forty.” About the year 1750 there existed several small water mills along the banks of the river, and the power of the stream was thus harnessed and utilised. Tradition tells of a “Higher Mill” and a “Lower Mill”

which existed at this time, the former on the site of the present paper mill, the latter on the opposite side of the river, where the railway viaduct crosses. The ancient corn mill, in Old Street, was of this date. A three-storeyed mill, worked by a "horse gin," existed in Ridge Hill Lane; it was afterwards converted into cottages, the tenements being finally demolished about fifty years ago, the site being still spoken of as the "mill hole." As the spot would be at the head of the well known "Swanwick Clough," it may have been the mill belonging to Messrs. Swanwick and Slater.

The steam engine made its appearance in the village a few years after its invention, and long before most of the neighbouring towns and villages were aware of its powers and advantages, and is thus referred to:— "About 1796 the first steam engine erected here (one of six horse-power) was introduced into Messrs. Hall's mill, by Mr. N. Hall."

The only existing description of this historical engine is the one given by Robert Platt, Esq., on the occasion of his laying the foundation stone of the Public Baths, on the 24th October, 1868, when, in the course of his speech, he said: "I well recollect the rough, uncouth engine, with its wooden beam, which was simply a square log of Baltic timber, such as you may see in Mr. Storrs' or other timber yards. . . . Many and many a time, when I was a little boy, have I ridden on that old beam."

Five years after the advent of steam-power at Messrs. Halls, the firm of Messrs. Lees, Cheetham and Co.

erected an engine of 40 horse-power to work their cotton mill. The mill was known as the "Bastile," and was destroyed by fire in 1804.

The engine was afterwards removed to the "Bowling Green Mills, where it was in existence until about 1859, when Albert Hall, Esq., added a new engine-house and engines to his mills.

Water-power was a great factor in the early days of the local manufacturers, and even to-day the use and advantage of the water-wheel are well known and appreciated.

The early spinning frames were known as water-frames, because they were turned by the aid of water-wheels; hence the reason why the early mills were generally located by the side of the river, or near a gully which might be converted into a reservoir, fed from a running stream.

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### Chapter 3.

The Early Spinning Mills—Primitive Carding—The First Jennies and Water Frames in the Town—Early Carding and Preparation—The Working Hours.

"The records we glean of the buried past may be found of sufficient interest . . . for these memorial pages."

*Richard Wright Procter.*

**A**CCORDING to the facts recorded: "In 1763, cotton-spinning and weaving were becoming common in the cottage garrets and shops. The first cotton mill was erected by a person of the name of Hall, in which carding was performed by water-



power, and spinning by hand." This mill was afterwards known as the "Soot-poke Mill," on account of the high chimney which was built for a smoke-shaft on the advent of the steam-engine twenty years later, and the reference to the place is as follows: "It was situated at the end of Wood Street, where now stands the railway arch used as a smithy, at the bottom of Rass-bottom Brow. Behind the mill was the dam from which it was worked, which was supplied from the stream of water which still flows from Ridge Hill. When the 'Soot-poke' ceased to be used as a factory, a part of it was let to a chandler, another portion to a wheelwright, and the top room for a theatre. The latter was under the management of the 'Thornhill Family,' and on the 29th May, 1824, it caught fire, just after the conclusion of a performance, in which gunpowder and fireworks had been freely used. The fire was got out, but the building afterwards became very much dilapidated, and was ultimately pulled down to prevent it from falling."

Arkwright, the pioneer of mill building, erected a mill at Nottingham in 1769, and in 1771 he built a second, at Cromford, in Derbyshire. Five years later, 1776, the village of Stalybridge possessed a cotton mill, which may be claimed to have been one of, if not the very first in Lancashire.

#### THE FIRST JENNIES AND WATER FRAMES IN THE TOWN.

From old-time records we quote as follows: "I was

set to work at the tender age of seven years (1785), and never had the chance of going to school after. My father had a couple of spinning jennies, one of 20 spindles and the other of 30 spindles, and I was set to work at one of them as a piecer. Some time after, I was sent to feed a cotton engine at the old mill in Old Street, in this town. Shortly after this, the drawing-frame was set to work by power, and I was taken from the cotton-engine and put to work at the first drawing-frame turned by power in this town. I was nearly two years at this work, and then became a piecer for my elder brother on a mule jenny belonging to James and Edward Adshead, who had some of the first mules in this town. I was in this situation about two years, when my father bought a couple of mules. My father and brother were making money rapidly, but at the breaking out of the French war a general panic set in, which was the ruin of three-fourths of those who had embarked in the business; in short, all went to ruin except those who had the means of having their machinery turned by power. The year 1793 was the most distressing period ever known by the oldest living."

#### EARLY CARDING.

The carding of cotton was done by using hand-cards up to the middle of the eighteenth century. Several attempts had been made, but without success, to do the work mechanically; the year 1772 saw the problem solved, by a Manchester man named John Lees, and a few years later the primitive engine was in use in Stalybridge.

A quaint, yet valuable echo from those bygone times, dealing with spinning and carding, runs thus:—

“The first spinning jenny ever I remember had 12 spindles, and my father worked upon it. I became a spinner myself soon after rollers were invented. I remember the time very well, because, not being big enough, my father pulled the chamber door off its hinges and put it so that I could reach far enough.

“I remember the time when cotton had to be washed at the houses of the operatives with hot water and soap, and then dried by the house fire.

“It was afterwards stretched on small cards and rolled on a table, and then spun on a single spindle.

“There was no machinery turned by steam or water-power used in the manufacture of cotton, all was done by shoulder work, and the carding engines of those days had a handle fixed to them, which was turned like turning an old grinding stone. . . . In later years . . . if four or five operatives would show themselves in the mill yard at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, the engineer started the machinery, and worked it as long as three or four workpeople would remain about the mill at night. . . . I have worked from 3 o'clock in the morning until 9 o'clock at night hundreds of times.”

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## Chapter 4.

Opposition to the Introduction of Machinery—"King Lud"—The Luddites and Mill Burners—The Luddite Oath—Anti-Luddite Placard—Military Intervention—Captain Raines at Roe Cross Inn—Executions of Luddites.

"To the thoughtful it may serve as a touchstone of reverence."  
*Sylvan.*

**T**HE cotton industry once firmly inaugurated in the vale began to flourish and spread.

The introduction of machinery, principally the power-loom, was, however, met by opposition. Violent measures were adopted by the dissatisfied portion of the people, and "King Lud" made his appearance in the district.

It is recorded that the doors of the mills were kept locked day and night, and the hives of industry resembled "garrisons" rather than manufactories. "King Lud" was the name given to the supposed leader, and his followers became known as "Luddites."

### THE OATH OF THE LUDDITES.

"I,.....of my own voluntary will, do declare and swear that I will never reveal to any person or persons under the canopy of Heaven the names of any of the persons composing the secret committee, either by word, deed, or sign, or by address, marks, or complexion, or by any other thing that may lead to the discovery of the same, under penalty of being put out of the world by the first brother whom I would meet, and of having my name and character

blotted out of existence. And I do further swear that I will use my utmost endeavours to punish with death any traitor or traitors who may rise up against us, though he should fly to the verge of existence. So help me God to keep this oath inviolable."

The preceding declaration was administered to all who joined the Society, and youths, only in their teens, were "twisted in" (which was the term used for the ceremony).

To counteract the efforts of the instigators of the movement placards were printed and posted on the walls of the mills threatened, which read as follows:—

"The villain who takes this oath deprives himself of that liberty which is the birthright of all Britons, deprives himself of trial by jury, and binds himself the willing slave of the vilest and most blood-thirsty assassins and incendiaries. . . . Again, this oath is an offence against man, as it defeats the purpose of human justice, and enables the assassin and murderer to escape with impunity, . . . because the traitors who have taken this oath weakly and wickedly suppose that it supersedes all moral and religious obligations, and think that such a compact which they have entered into releases them from any duty which they owe to God, their King, and their country." Military aid was requisitioned by the manufacturers of this district, and a Scotch regiment, then stationed in the southern part of England, was ordered to march to this neighbourhood. The Colonel of this body of troops was the Duke of Montrose, and although we find no record of

his presence here, Captain Raines, who had been an officer in the Light Dragoons, led the soldiers into the district, and made the Roe Cross Inn his headquarters. There are in existence numerous despatches and other military documents dated from that place. On the termination of Luddite troubles, Captain Raines was presented with a piece of plate (valued at 100 guineas) for his services. Many particulars with respect to these times will be found in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1812-13.

The reign of terror of the Luddites began in November, 1811, and became contagious throughout the cotton districts. Gangs of armed workpeople went from place to place, destroying property and machinery, and even threatening life. Power-looms were smashed, and mills were fired. The rioters were arrested in large numbers, tried and convicted, some of them perishing on the scaffold. On June 8, 1812, eight men were executed for rioting at Manchester, whilst one week later, June 15, other 12 met a similar fate.

On the 20th April, 1812, there were violent riots and disturbances at Stalybridge, whilst at Marsden, Yorkshire, on the 28th of the same month, a Mr. Horsfall was murdered as he was returning from Huddersfield market. For this crime three men were hung at York, on the 8th January, 1813; whilst eight days later, 16th January, fourteen others also perished in the same fashion. A very common expression in this district, in our own time, was "Aw'd stond th' drop o' York."

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## Chapter 5.

Factory Life in 1814—Treatment of Operatives—Wages—Pay-days—Accident to Joseph Bayley.

“ If any gleaner can add a fresh grain to the historical harvest already garnered, it is presumable he may bring his grain and be welcomed.”

*Sylvan.*

**F**ROM a book published in the early part of last century, we glean the following interesting reference to :

“ Work, Wages, and Factory Life in Stalybridge in 1804.” “ Arrived at Stalybridge, where there were many spinning factories. I applied to a man named W. G., who had formerly been in Yorkshire, but about twelve years before the time I applied to him, he was one of the overlookers at Lowdam Mill, where he was very much addicted to kicking the apprentices, and dragging them about the rooms by the hair of the head, and then dashing them upon the floor. . . . As I was anxious to get work, and knowing that he was an overlooker at a mill popularly known as the ‘ Bastile,’ I solicited work from him. . . . So to W. G. I repaired, and as he had bestowed so many marks of his parental regard upon me, he recognised me at once, and very kindly got me work at ten shillings a week. On the pay night he still more kindly drew my wages, from which he took what he had a mind, for my bed and board, so that there was little left for me, and I had nothing to do but work, which was very moderate,

compared with what I had been used to at Lytton Mill.

“ I worked at this mill for some months, but not being satisfied with the stewardship of W. G. I took an early opportunity of removing from his hospitable roof, and the result was that I could live upon one-half my wages, and lay the other half by.

“ Notwithstanding the unseemly name given to the mill, the workpeople were not locked in the rooms as at the mills elsewhere. The wages paid, however, were very low, and the work I was on, although not anything equal to what I had been used to, I considered too heavy for the wages. I was engaged as a ‘stripper’ of the top cards of a carding-engine, and the fixed quantity to turn off was six pounds a day. Some time after I was keeping myself, the master came up to us, while we were at work, and said we must either strip a heavier quantity of cotton per day or we must leave, and as I did not feel inclined to perform more work for the pay I was receiving I asked for my wages, and, having got them, left the ‘Bastile.’

“ After I had left, I went to Mr. Leech, the owner of a factory on the Cheshire side of the river—the Bastile being on the Lancashire side—and by him I was engaged at nine shillings a week. I found the cotton, however, so unusual to me, and the work so hard, that after I had been there three days I determined to leave. I probably should not have left when I did, as the first few days at a strange place are always hard, until the peculiarities of the cotton and machinery are fairly understood; but there was another objection—



wages were paid only once in three weeks. After three days' toil, I went to my master and asked him to lend me as much silver as my wages come to, and having obtained it I took 'French leave,' to the great offence of my master.

"I remained at Stalybridge some time, although unemployed, and had every opportunity of contrasting the factory system I had been brought up to with the one in my fresh surroundings. The next place I obtained work at was the mill of a Mr. Bayley, whose father had recently had one of his arms torn off by a 'blower,' and such were the injuries inflicted that he died in a few hours from the dreadful effects of that accident. I stopped at this place, stripping cards for eleven shillings a week, for many months, when, having saved a few pounds, I determined to try my fortune at Manchester, so I left the town and wended my way to the latter place."





## PART III.

### EARLY COTTON MASTERS AND TRADE DISTURBANCES.

#### Chapter 1.

The Pioneers of the Cotton Trade—Directory 1794-1797—  
Early Cotton Spinners, Woollen Manufacturers, Iron Founders,  
Millwrights, and Hat Manufacturers.

“ A few years since some cotton spinners  
Settled here as new beginners,  
Small rooms they filled with looms and jennies,  
Which spun their shillings into guineas.”—*Old Ballad.*

“ In the lottery of life the capital prizes must of necessity  
be limited to the few.”

**I**T was the custom for the manufacturers to meet their customers at one of the principal inns in Manchester, or Huddersfield. From various sources a list of Stalybridge manufacturers who had a Manchester address in 1794 and 1797 has been compiled :

#### 1794.—COTTON MANUFACTURERS.

Earnshaw, William ; Hatchett, J. ; Slater and Swanwick ; Orrell, John.

## COTTON SPINNERS.

Brierley John	Hall Edward	Ousey William
Earnshaw William	Hall James	Sidebottom Wm.
Gartside Samuel	Knott Robert	Sidebottom James
Gregory Matthew	Ousey Samuel	Whitehead Ralph
	Whitehead Daniel.	

## WOOLLEN MANUFACTURERS.

Buckley John	Hall Joseph	Ousey Thomas
Hall James	Heap Henry	Wilson William.
Hall Robert	Mellor Benjamin	

## WARP MAKERS.

Cooke George	Knott Daniel	Kershaw John
Heginbotham Jno.	Kershaw Hugh	Mellor John.

## CARRIERS.

Fogg James	Saxton James	Worthington William
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## 1797.—COTTON MANUFACTURERS.

Brierley John	Knott Daniel	Mellor James
Earnshaw William	Knott D., junr.	Ogden John & Co.
Hall Edward	Lees Joseph	Orrell John
Kershaw Hugh	Lees John	Ousey Samuel
Knott Robert	Lees & Chadwick	Ousey William.

## WOOLLEN MANUFACTURERS.

Hall George	Heap Robert	Sidebottom
Heap Joseph	Lilley John	Edward
Heap William	Ousey Thomas.	
Wagstaffe, Luke—SPINDLE MAKER.		
Mellor, Benjamin—BLUE DYER.		
Platt, John—WARP MAKER.		

The termination of the Peninsular War, and the fall of Napoleon I. in 1815 had a marked effect upon the enterprise and trade of Stalybridge. The reaction from the troublous times of 1811-12 was great. New firms came into existence, and several of the old ones revived, whilst the machinists, ironworkers, and early engine builders established themselves.

The list of manufacturers under the heading of Stalybridge for the year 1818 is as follows:—

## 1818.—COTTON SPINNERS.

Adshead Brothers	Hall James (1)	Lees Thomas
Bayley Mary	Hall James (2)	Mellor James
Bayley James	Harrison & Sons	Orrell John
Boyer Widow	Platt George	Saxon George
Cheetham George	Lees John & Sons	Smith Samuel.
Hall James & Son	Leech John	

## WOOLLEN MANUFACTURERS.

Buckley J. & Sons	Hall Joseph	Lawton William
Buckley Joseph	Hyde Abel	Schofield Miles
Garside Jonathan	Hyde John	Wilson George
Hall George	Kinder George	Wilson John.

## CLOTH DRESSERS.

Hall George	Sidebottom Eliza-	Smith John
Newton John		beth Walker Isaac.

## MACHINE MAKERS.

Lawton and Roe ;    Wilkinson and Hazeldine.

## BLACKSMITHS.

Allot Moses	Howard John	Wagstaffe Luke.
Binns Charles	Seel Thomas	
Wainwright, Benjamin—MILLWRIGHT.		

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LIST OF STALYBRIDGE MANUFACTURERS,  
1825.

## COTTON SPINNERS AND MANUFACTURERS.

Bayley Mary, and Sons	Harrison Thomas, and Sons
Leech and Vaudrey	Lees John, and Sons.

## COTTON SPINNERS.

Adshead James and Bros.	Howard James and Ralph
Ainsworth George and Co.	Orrell Thomas and Sons
Bayley James	Platt George
Boyer Mary	Platt Joshua
Cheetham George	Saville Joseph
Hall James	Wagstaffe and Sidebottom
Hall James and Sons	Waring John and William
Howard Daniel	Wilkinson and Binns.

## WOOLLEN MANUFACTURERS.

Hall George	Heap Mary	Shaw Hugh & Sons
Hall Joseph	Hollinworth Edwd.	Stelfox and Kinder

## MILLWRIGHTS AND ENGINEERS.

Cook Joseph; Wainwright Benjamin.

## MACHINE MAKERS.

Lawton Thomas	Siddall James
Ousey George	Wilkinson James.

## IRON AND BRASS FOUNDERS.

Shelter and Milburn          Wainwright Benjamin.

## HAT MANUFACTURERS.

Andrew John	Marsland Jeremiah
Hall Joseph	Furner William

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LIST OF STALYBRIDGE MANUFACTURERS,  
1848.

## COTTON SPINNERS.

Marked \* thus are also manufacturers by power.  
 Adshhead James, and Brothers, Staley New Mills,  
 Bayley James, and Sons, Albion Mills, Huddersfield Rd.  
 \*Bayley William, and Brothers, Bridge Street Mills,  
 \*Benson George, and Co., Kershaw Wood Mills,



Lawton, Thomas (and Machine-maker), Bennett Street.

Milburn, William, Tame Foundry, Castle Street.

Wainwright, Benjamin (and Millwright), Leech Street.

#### IRON ROLLER MAKERS.

Andrew and Hilton, Wagstaffe Street.

Milburn, Hallsworth and Co., Back Grosvenor Street.

#### MACHINE MAKERS.

Broadbent, Robert, Castle Hall Steam Saw Mills.

Lawton, Thomas, Bennett Street.

Milburn, Hallsworth and Co., Back Grosvenor Street.

Wilkinson, James, Copley Mills.

#### ENGINEERS AND MILLWRIGHTS.

Dean and Tinker, Eagle Foundry.

Gimson, Yates and Ainsworth, Stayley Ironworks.

Wainwright, Benjamin, Commercial Ironworks.





## Chapter 2.

Rapid Growth of the Town—Statistics of Population—Number of Mills—Prosperity of the Cotton-Masters—List of Mansions, &c.

“When I was a boy some elderly personages with whom I was acquainted were kind enough to describe to me events . . . and the stories I then heard have made a lasting impression upon me.”

*William Harrison Ainsworth.*

The Trade Disturbances of 1830-31—The Remedy—List of Special Constables—Precautions.

“And may not, . . . men with honest pride, confess that in the records of the good old town, there are to be found examples worthy of imitation in all succeeding ages.”

*James Croston, F.S.A.*

The Rising of the Chartists—The People's Charter—The Pike Maker—“The Parson and the Pike.”

**THE** reliable accounts of the town and its advancement are as follows:—“In 1814 there were nearly twelve factories; in 1818 they had increased to about sixteen. During the first twenty years of the present century (1800-1820) the excellent position of Staley-Bridge, with all its advantages of fuel and facilities of conveyance were duly appreciated; so that the town became larger every year; the streets multiplied rapidly; houses started into existence as if by magic; extensive factories reared their massive walls; and the site of the woods of Staley became a flourishing town.”

The population of Stalybridge in 1823 is recorded as 5,500 persons. In the course of the succeeding two years (1824-5) there was a most extraordinary increase, partially owing to the settlement of a considerable

number of Irish families, who were attracted hither by the prospect of better wages than were to be obtained in their own country. In 1825 the population appears to have been at least 9,000.

In 1831 a census was taken within the limits of the Police Commissioners, the returns being as follows:—Total number of persons, 14,216 (males 6,625, females 7,591) inhabited houses, 2,357; families, 2,629; families employed in trade, 1,949; families employed in agriculture, 23; in other occupations, 657; males over 20 years of age, 2,976; men employed as labourers, excavators, builders, etc., 1,997.

The statement published by one historian is to the effect that in the space of 92 years, viz., from 1749 to 1841, the population of Stalybridge increased from 140 to 9,000.

In 1836 the number, condition, religion, and other matters in connection with the inhabitants of Stalybridge were ascertained by a statistical survey, under the guidance and supervision of the Manchester Statistical Society, which resulted as follows:—Population, 17,200. Number of dwellings examined, 3,313—viz., houses, 2,587; sitting-rooms, 670; cellars, 56; old public-houses, 29; beer-shops, 10. Persons living in houses, 12,345; living in rooms, 670; living in cellars 56; persons able to read and write, 4,484; able to read only, 4,188. Heads of families, Church of England, 769; lodgers of same persuasion, 95. Heads of families, dissenters, 917; lodgers of same persuasion, 169, Heads

of families, Catholics, 455 ; lodgers of same persuasion, 436. Heads of families of other beliefs, 1,174 ; lodgers of same persuasion, 588.

A communication of the Rev. J. F. Anderton, Roman Catholic Priest, dated August, 1840, gives the numbers of the Catholic population within the police limits of Stalybridge as follows : Total number of individuals, 3,365 ; of whom 2,184 were upwards of thirteen years of age.

In 1841 the population of Stalybridge was estimated as being between 20,000 and 21,000, the increase in the preceding ten years being nearly 7,000.

1823	No. of Spinning Mills and Loom Mills		26
	No. of Spindles	.....	200,000
1825	No. of Spinning Mills exclusive of Loom Mills	.....	22
	Steam Engines 29	} Aggregate } horse-power	862
	Water-wheels 6		
	No. of Spindles in the Town	.....	354,580
	No. of Power Looms in the Town	..	2,470
1831	Steam Engines, about 38	} aggregate } horse-power	1,000
	Several Water-wheels		
1833	Net earnings of 8,542 operatives in Stalybridge and Dukinfield,	£19,409 7s. 6½d	
	Average per head, per week	.....	13s. 6d.
1841	Number of Spindles in the Town	..	536,000
	Power Looms	.....	5,000

The prosperity of the cotton-masters was apparent in the noble mansions which they erected on the outskirts of the town. A writer of the period (rather

a harsh critic one is inclined to think) thus refers to them :—“ As a body, the manufacturers are wealthy—clever—and have extensive business connections, but their political interest is the most feeble of that of all branches of commercial industry, for they have allowed their accumulated wealth to entomb them. They have huge factory-like houses within the sound of their machinery, dinners of puzzling variety, equipages, servants, everything of the costliest and best; . . . but where are there any indications of a refined and generous liberality? The yearly stagnation of their incomes generates nothing but a noxious desire to have a higher chimney or a bigger mill than their neighbours.”

The following list of mansions and family residences may be of interest :—

- Eastwood, George Cheetham
- Hyde's House, Joseph Bayley
- Kelsall House, Jeremiah Lees
- Vaudrey House, Thomas Vaudrey
- Stamford Lodge, John Lees
- Hob Hill House, John Orrell
- Albion House, James Bayley
- House (corner of King Street), George Cheetham
- The Woodlands, Charles C. Bayley
- House, Bowling Green, James Hall
- Woodfield, Rev. Thos. Evans
- Thompson Cross, Thomas Harrison
- Acres Bank, James Adshead
- West Hill, William Harrison
- The Wood, Millbrook, George Adshead

Highfield, Abel Harrison  
Brookfield, James Wilkinson  
Gorse Hall, John Leech  
Park Hill, James Howard  
The Priory, David Cheetham  
Heyrod Hall, Ralph Ousey.

## TRADE DISTURBANCES.

In the autumn of 1830, a serious strike amongst the operative classes, for increased wages, prevailed in this district. It is referred to by those who have heard their parents tell about it as the "Four-and-twopence a swing." To such an extent did the excitement grow that military aid was sought, and the men were quartered in certain mills in the neighbourhood. The "Police Commissioners," however, were alive to the danger, and forthwith prepared for any emergency which might arise. The records of the period give the following information:—December 10th, 1830.—Ordered that five dozen Constable's Staves be provided for the use of Special Constables."

"In consequence of the present disturbed state of this town and neighbourhood, it is become highly necessary to increase the Civil force forthwith."

"Ordered that twelve able-bodied men be engaged as Assistant Constables for the day, and that a night patrol of thirty-six men be immediately established."

It was now a well-known fact that bands of hired assassins were nightly lurking in the vicinity of the

mills, ready to wreak vengeance on their victims. The magistrates of the district were requisitioned to sit or hold a bench in Stalybridge "as soon as possible."

A resolution of December 17th, 1830, contains the following: "That a letter be sent to the magistrates requesting them to direct the public-houses to be closed at an early hour in the evening in consequence of the disturbed state of the town and neighbourhood."

December 31st.—"That twelve Watchman's Boxes be forthwith provided and fixed in such situations within the town as the committee for managing the night patrol shall appoint."

"That eighteen Watchmen's Rattles be provided."

The excitement was intense; gun-shots were heard during the dead of night, first on one side of the town and then on the other.

A special contingent of honorary constables was organised to the number of 120, each man chosen being reliable.

#### LIST OF HEAD CONSTABLES, DEPUTY CONSTABLES, ASSISTANT CONSTABLES AND SPECIAL CONSTABLES

on duty during the Trade Disturbances, December, 1830, and January, 1831.

##### HEAD CONSTABLES.

Mr. James Bayley, Mr. Jeremiah Lees, and Mr. Abel Bayley.

DEPUTY CONSTABLE—Mr. Edward Garside.

ASSISTANT CONSTABLES AND SPECIAL CONSTABLES.

John Leech	David Harrison	George Platt, senr.
John Vaudrey	James Hall	James Adshead
William Orrell	George Platt, junr.	John Cook
John Orrell	Edward Vaudrey	Abel Harrison
Ralph Hall	Edwd, Sidebottom	David Cheetham
James Bayley	Abel Bayley	William Plant
Joseph Garlick	Jeremiah Lees	Samuel Dowse
James Wilkinson	Benj. Wainwright	John Wagstaffe
Robert Platt	Samuel Hopwood	Joshua Cheetham
Abrm, Sunderland	James Cook	Samuel Pearson
James Wagstaffe	Aaron Adshead	William Bayley
William Harrison	Ammon Hall	Henry Orrell
Iowerth Davis	William Dawson	Edward Burton
George Lee	Nathan Andrew	Edward Kerfoot
Henry Atkins	Jonathan Hibbert	John Reece
Thomas Bradley	John Heywood	Allen Harrison
Thomas Lawton	Thomas Dawson	George Brooks
James Brierley	Charles Bayley	Albert Hall
James Bayley	Thomas Smith	James Houghton
Joseph Brierley	John Cheetham	Thomas Whitehead
John Hopwood	Jonathan Andrew	William Garside
Jethro Tinker	Wm, Sidebottom	Chris. Charlesworth
James Clegg	Israel Massey	Joseph Bannister
Thomas Wild, senr.	Robert Lawton	Joseph Schofield
Chris, Medcalf	Mark Bredbury	George Hinchcliffe
Aaron Hall	James White	Jeremiah Cheetham
Joseph Buckley	James Walsh	Thomas Cheetham

*Assistant Constables and Special Constables—Continued.*

Latimer Finn	Thomas Burkett	Samuel Buckley
James Stansfield	Jonath'n Kershaw	James Fogg
James Crossley	G. F. Cheetham	James Hill
David Cheetham	Robert Whitehead	George Devonport
Thomas Blakeley	James Roecliffe	John Chadwick
John Williamson	John Buckley	William Garside
Robert Whitehead	Joshua Wood	William Bentley
James Burton	Hugh Ashton	James Heap
John Carrol	Thomas Shaw	Robert White
George Hall	Joseph Hobson	John Hilton
Henry Birch	James Ford	James Mills
Edward Hilton	John Booth	Abdiel Berry
John Cheetham	Joseph Norton	George Chadwick

Scarcely had these precautions been taken in Stalybridge when a dastardly crime was committed in the immediate vicinity. On the 3rd of January, 1831, as Mr. Thomas Ashton, cotton master, was returning home from the mill at Apethorn, near Gee Cross, he was deliberately waylaid and murdered in cold blood. The assassins escaped, and for a long period, in spite of a reward of £1,500, remained unknown. At length one of them, for they numbered three, turned informer, and his two companions in crime perished on the gallows.

The firmness of the Stalybridge Police Commissioners at this critical period produced its effect. A duty-book used by the patrol is in existence, and contains many significant entries. The excitement abated, and the operatives returned to their work in the mills. On the



11th February, 1831, the following was written : " That the night patrol be reduced to twenty men." A week later an addition was made thus : " That the whole of the men employed as night patrol be discharged on Saturday next, and the said night patrol be discontinued in consequence of the peaceable state of the town and neighbourhood."

### THE CHARTISTS.

The Chartists were a body of reformers recruited mainly from the operative classes of the cotton manufacturing districts. Their leaders have been described by the records which deal with the movement in detail, as follows :—" Feargus O'Connor, a man of wild recklessness, and Joseph Rayner Stephens, . . . a fanatic, who possessed a great command of language and great power of declamation."

The objects for which the Chartists agitated were known as " The People's Charter," and were as follows : " 1st, Universal Suffrage ; 2nd, Vote by Ballot ; 3rd, Annual Parliaments ; 4th, the Division of the County into equal electoral districts ; 5th, the abolition of the property qualification in Members of Parliament, and payment for their services." The Chartists had a newspaper, which was established by Feargus O'Connor. To such an extent did the organisation grow that they defied all authority, and marched in procession through the district with flaming torches, banners, and firearms. On the 14th November, 1838, a great meeting was held at Newton Moor. Mr. Stephens was present, and for

the speech which he made on that occasion he was arrested, and subsequently tried at the Chester Assizes, August 15th, 1839. A full account of the trial (once the property of the writer) may be seen in the Ashton-under-Lyne Free Library. In passing the sentence of eighteen months' imprisonment upon Mr. Stephens, the learned Judge, Mr. Justice Pattison, said: ". . . . I am very sorry to have to pass sentence upon any person of your talent and ability, and of your education."

On his release from prison he came back to Stalybridge and was the recipient of a testimonial as follows:—  
"To the Reverend Joseph Rayner Stephens, who, for maintaining, in perilous times, the cause of the poor, suffered eighteen months' imprisonment in Chester Castle, this cup (with accompanying tea service for Mrs. Stephens) was presented by admiring and devoted friends in Stalybridge."

A local blacksmith did a roaring trade during the existence of the agitation by manufacturing and supplying pikes to the Chartists. He had agents in all the disaffected districts, through whom he received commissions and supplied orders.

The Government of the time, it is said, passed a Bill through both houses in the course of a single evening making it a crime to be found in possession of these weapons. As soon as the news reached this district thousands of pikes met a watery grave in the Tame and elsewhere; while for years after it was customary for the local gardeners, when delving their ground up in

the spring of the year, to disinter the half-rusted blade of some hidden and forgotten pike.

The ballad of "The Parson and the Pike," which was sung through the streets of the town, and of which there are still copies in existence, deals with a certain clergyman who is named, and a Chartist tailor. The tailor was visited by the "Parson," who, in the heat of his loyalty, thought to trap the "Knight of the Thimble and Pike," and hand him over to justice.

A "pike" was ordered, and in the course of a few days the clergyman called for it, and, having had the parcel handed to him, he paid the price due, left the shop, and proceeded to the police office, where he laid the "pike before the constable." Instant arrest of the tailor was advocated by the "Parson." The constable decided that the parcel should first be opened, when a "stale, stinking pike-fish, was discovered"; the "Parson" was not in the best of tempers when he found that he had been tricked by the tailor. The verses are too lengthy, otherwise they would have appeared in these pages.

### THE "'42" TURN-OUT.

The great "Turn-out" of 1842 commenced in Bridge Street, Stalybridge. It is an acknowledged fact that this vale of ours has always been a battle-ground for the settlement of disputes connected with the operative classes.

The origin of this dispute is said to have had its birth amongst a class of spinners who were known as "Crashers" who worked on jennies of "twelve dozens," and "the power-loom weavers," who were to be the first to suffer a reduction of wages. Meetings were held, and a resolution passed by a vast assemblage of operatives, "That all labour should cease throughout Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire." A compromise was sought by the hands, but was not listened to. The struggle commenced on the first Friday in August, 1842. The excited operatives held meetings on the Saturday and Sunday, and doubtless the presence of the inevitable "Firebrands" helped the smouldering embers to blaze forth. Monday morning came, and with it the "Turn-outs" marched in procession to Ashton and stopped all the mills, by what has been termed "plug-drawing." The railway system was in its infancy in this neighbourhood, and the "turn-outs" even went so far as to tamper with the locomotives.

"A fair day's wage for a fair day's work" became the cry of the excited people. Riots took place at Ashton, Stockport, Oldham, Blackburn, etc., etc., and in some cases the military had to be sent for, and the "mob" was even fired upon.

One resolution passed by the Stalybridge men was to this effect, and it was communicated to the officer in command of the soldiers in this district: "That if a sword was drawn upon them, or a musket fired at them, each man would return home and set fire to his own habitation."

After a period of six weeks, after a struggle and fight, of which old tongues still tell, the operatives were glad to yield and return to their work, poorer, humbler, sadder, and it is to be hoped wiser men. Many of them had to suffer for this in after days, and several of the ringleaders were sent across the seas to Van Dieman's Land, and under compulsion left their country for their country's good.





## PART IV.

### THE COTTON "PANIC," ITS CAUSE AND EFFECT.

#### Chapter 1.

The War Cloud of 1852-3-4—57—"The Cotton Supply Association," John Cheetham, Esq.—Early Cotton Imports—Comparative Prices, Returns, and Wages on the eve of the "Cotton Panic."

"The Angel of Death is abroad, we can almost feel the beating of his wings."  
*John Bright.*

**T**HE outbreak of the Crimean War and its continuance through the years 1852-3-4, had a very serious effect upon this district. Many young men were lured from their situations in the various manufactories by the gay ribbons of the recruiting sergeants, with their glowing accounts of the life and prospects in store for those who accepted the "Queen's Shilling." The patriotic spirit which seems inherent in the blood of the natives of this valley asserted itself, and numbers of young men enlisted at the local *Depôt*, and were rapidly passed through the stages of their preliminary training. The annals of "The Alma," "Sebastopol," and "The Storming of the Redan," contain the names of many worthy sons of Stalybridge.

The termination of hostilities in the Crimea was followed by the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny, in 1857, whilst minor wars in various parts of the world continued to disturb the commerce of England.

In 1857 a number of representative cotton manufacturers and merchants formed a society known as “ The Cotton Supply Association.” Our illustrious townsman, the late John Cheetham, Esq., M.P., was the president of that association. The scheme had its inception “ in the prospective fears of a portion of the trade that some dire calamity must inevitably, sooner or later, overtake the cotton manufacture of Lancashire, whose vast superstructure had so long rested upon the treacherous foundation of restricted slave-labour as the main source of supply for its raw material.”

The thinking men of the time who formed this barrier against a failure of supply were not supported by the capitalists as they ought to have been.

The society sent out its pioneers, and established agencies for the purpose of introducing cotton-growing in the following countries :—Turkey, Italy, Egypt, Spain, Portugal, Australia, the Brazils, South America, etc., and distributed large consignments of cotton seeds. Preparatory machinery, viz., cotton gins, and other appliances, were despatched in large quantities. From a report issued by the association in 1862 we glean that “ a prize of from £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 per annum is at the present moment offered by the trade of Lancashire, to be competed for by all nations capable of growing cotton.” The experiences of recent years, in

addition to those of "the Cotton Panic," have given proof of the foresight of the founders and promoters of the now almost forgotten "Cotton Supply Association" of 1857.

For the use of those who are largely interested in the principal trade of Stalybridge, and who may not be able to find time to hunt up old records in connection with the cotton trade, the following may be worth notice:— "Until the year 1788 the supply of cotton for the manufacturers of Manchester and district was derived principally from the West Indies, and Lancaster was the principal English port through which it passed to the consumer. Soon after that time the States of North America, and our own settlements in the East, began to export cotton to this country."

The Cotton imports into Liverpool for the year 1770 according to William Enfield in his "History of Liverpool," published in 1770, were as follows:—

Antigua,	168 bags	Continent	
Barbadoes,	459 bags	of America :	
Dominique,	705 bags	New York,	3 bales
Granada,	1,083 bags	Virginia,	4 bags
Jamaica,	1,775 bags	North Carolina,	3 barrels
St. Kits,	100 bags	Georgia,	3 bags
Montserrat,	178 bags		
Tartola,	949 bags		
St. Vincent,	610 bags		

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Total, 6,027 bags      Total, 7 bags, 3 barrels, 3 bales



On the eve of the outbreak of the American War the weekly consumption of cotton in this country was

East and West Indian, 3,461 bags ;  
 Brazilian or Egyptian, 3,968 bags ;  
 American, - - 41,094 bags.

The value of the cotton consumed in the United Kingdom in 1860 was estimated at £33,520,919.

In 1784 the value of 1lb. of No. 42's yarn was 10s. 11d.

„ 1860 „ „ „ „ 11d.

„ 1786 „ „ „ 100's „ £1 18s.

„ 1860 „ „ „ „ 2s. 6d.

„ 1760 the Dock Dues at Liverpool were £2,330.

„ 1860 „ „ „ „ £444,417.

The period of prosperity experienced by the cotton masters of Stalybridge saw the inauguration of better wages for the operatives, and hence a larger circulation of money in the town. The hours of labour were reduced, better machinery was introduced, and the importance of education began to be considered. A comparison of the weekly earnings of the operatives, as given by a reliable authority, is very interesting :

	1844				1860		
	£	s.	d.	..	£	s.	d.
Spinner .....	1	3	6	..	1	9	0
Big Piecer .....	0	12	0	..	0	13	0
Little Piecer .....	0	6	6	..	0	9	0
Lap Machine Tenter .....	0	12	0	14s. to	0	17	0
Card Strippers and Grinders ..	0	12	0	18s. to	1	0	0
Roving Frame Tenter .....	0	9	0	..	0	11	6
Slubbing Frame Tenter .....	0	9	0	..	0	11	6
Drawing Frame Tenter .....	0	9	0	..	0	11	0

In 1844 the operatives worked 72 hours per week, while in 1860, the time had been reduced to 60 hours per week

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## Chapter 2.

The "Cotton Panic" and its cause—John Brown—President Lincoln—Local Manufacturers and the War—Commencement of the Blockade—Confederate Bonds—The Blockade-Runners—American Sympathy.

" In Sixty-one the war began,  
 In Sixty-two 'twas half way through ;  
 In Sixty-three the niggers were free,  
 In Sixty-four the war was o'er."—*Yankee Ballad.*

THE cause of the "Panic" was the failure of the supply of cotton from the United States of America. Lancashire mills were dependent mainly upon that source for the material required, and the outbreak of hostilities between the Northern and Southern States of the American Republic completely stopped the shipment of cotton from that country to this.

The Civil War, as it was termed, was the result of a division of the United States on the question of "emancipation" of the slaves of the great cotton plantations of the South. In 1859, John Brown, a stern believer in the equality of the black and white, made a raid into Virginia in connection with his scheme for the liberation of the slaves. For his share in the cause of humanity, John Brown perished on the scaffold, on the site of

which there stands to-day a magnificent statue to his worth and memory, and the refrain of the old war-song of the North lives to-day :

“ John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave,  
But his soul—goes marching on.”

On the 4th March, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States, the Confederacy, or Southern States, having made Jefferson Davis their President.

On the 15th of April, President Lincoln called for 70,000 troops, to which there responded 93,326 men. From that date the working classes of this town began to suffer, many fine young fellows crossed the western ocean, and not a few were included in 2,690,401 soldiers who eventually fought for the freedom of the slave.

From April, 1861, until May, 1865, was the period of hostilities in the States. On the 14th April, 1865, President Lincoln was assassinated, and a month later the cause he had at heart became the law of his country, and slavery was abolished.

In the early summer of 1861, some of the local mills began to run short time, and gradually trade grew worse and worse, until want and starvation began to throw their gaunt shadows over the whole district.

The memories of those times, as told by the veteran operatives of to-day, would fill volumes of interesting reading.

The Confederate Government inaugurated a system known as "The Cotton Loan." Money was borrowed from the manufacturers in this district, and "made payable in cotton at fivepence per pound,"

A clause in the agreement "restricted the trade to vessels which carried a certain proportion of Confederate bonds, which, being discharged in cotton, enabled them to borrow again." By this practice, which was called "Running the Blockade," there came into this country in 1862, 71,750 bales of American cotton; and in 1863, 131,900 bales.

Some years ago it was the lot of the author to be acquainted with several daring "Blockade Runners," who sailed from the port of Liverpool during this period. The profits of this risky business were enormous; the penalty, if captured by the Federal Men-of-War, was death.

Many of the local manufacturers laughed at the idea that the "Yankee War" would last more than a few months, and the sympathy was considerably in favour of the South. Vast sums of money were, it is asserted, sent for the use and support of the "Confederate cause." A few of the wiser employers and capitalists shook their heads and silently awaited the result. The prices of raw material began to rise as the Federals of the North began to blockade the Southern ports. The Confederate Government relied upon their belief, a belief which was that of some of our own townsmen, that "Cotton was King in England, and that the old country could not

do without it, and would be forced in order to secure its release to side with those who kept it prisoner.” The Southern States had with them experienced Generals and unlimited monetary supplies when the critical moment arrived for the commencement of hostilities.

It is gratifying to know that during the time that the Civil War was raging the Americans sent for the relief of the Lancashire operatives the sum of £1,333 5s. 11d. in money and about £27,000 in provisions. A New York merchant named George Griswold freighted his own ship, bearing his own name, and paid the salaries of his officers and sailors, and sent them across to the old country with a cargo of provisions for the distressed operatives.

The commander of the ship was invited to Manchester as the guest of the General Relief Committee, and at a dinner, presided over by the Mayor of Manchester (Abel Heywood, Esq.), in replying to the assemblage he said—“ God grant that the war desolating our land may soon be settled—that trade and commerce may flourish once more—and that England and America may ever extend the hand of good-fellowship to each other.”

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### Chapter 3.

“Hard Times”—Ruin for the Masters—Suffering for the Operatives—The Surat Weaver’s Song—Bankruptcies.

“We ’ve had our troubles since, but none big enough to blot from our minds the biggest of all.”

*Mason.*

**I**N 1861 the cotton operatives of Stalybridge little dreamed of the struggles and privations which in a very short time were to envelope them.

They were even busying themselves with the idea of demanding an increase of wages. The masters, who knew more of the true state of affairs than their work-people, waited for a break in the threatening war-cloud, which was spreading and over-shadowing the commercial interests of the district. In March, 1861, a turnout of weavers for an advance of wages occurred at several mills in the town. Suddenly the outbreak of hostilities on the other side of the Atlantic paralysed the trade of the district. The local mills began to run short time, and as the sounds of strife and carnage increased in the United States the busy hum of the shuttle and the spindle grew fainter and fainter until they gradually died away; and the great hives of industry, which for generations had thrilled with activity, stood grim and silent.

Thousands of operatives, with willing hands, but aching hearts, wandered listlessly through the district.

Before the distressed workpeople would seek help or relief, hundreds of them endeavoured to eke out a living in some fashion or other. Those who were musical—and Stalybridge has always been noted for its musicians—went into other districts and tried to earn something by their vocal or instrumental talents.

A writer of the period thus refers to them: “ Now, when fortune has laid such a load of sorrow upon the working people of ————, it is touching to see so many workless minstrels in humble life. . . . They come singing in twos and threes, and sometimes in more numerous bands, as if to keep one another in countenance. . . . Their faces are sad, and their manners often singularly shamefaced and awkward, but the careful observer would see at a glance that these people were altogether unused to the craft of the trained minstrel of the streets. . . . Their clear, healthy complexions, though often touched with pallor, their simple unimportunate demands, and the general rusticity of their appearance show them to be

“ Suppliants who would blush  
 To wear a tattered garb, however coarse ;  
 Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth ;  
 Who ask with painful shyness, and refused  
 Because deserving, silently retire.”

The winter of 1862-3 came and found 7,000 operatives without employment in Stalybridge, and a vast number only partially employed. The number of concerns in the town at this period is given as 66, made up of 39

factories, 24 foundries and machine-shops, and 3 bobbin-turning shops. Only five of these establishments were employed full-time. Many of the mill-owners assisted their hands in various ways.

The pressure became keener as week after week went by, when finally a scheme of relief was formulated by the country at large. Other nations and countries lent their practical sympathy, and from all over the world contributions poured in for the use of the suffering cotton operatives of Lancashire. At one period it is recorded that three-fourths of the operatives of Stalybridge were dependent upon the benevolence of a generous people. In the midst of all this trouble and want, a serious difference occurred between the unemployed operatives and the local committee appointed to distribute relief. An organised opposition commenced, which eventually led to "The Bread Riots."

As a result of the intense distress which prevailed in the town, when two years had elapsed, the population decreased rapidly.

There were in the town, in 1863, 750 empty houses and shops, and it is recorded that property owners, who could not expect to receive rent from their starving tenants, were not ashamed to sweep the streets for the Corporation in order to clear off their own liabilities for rates and taxes. Operatives who had the means or chance to emigrate to other countries did so, and it is estimated that upwards of a thousand skilled men and women left the town during the "Panic."



At the commencement of the distress (1861) the balance due to depositors in the “ Savings Bank ” amounted to £92,122 9s., and the number of separate deposits was 2,603.

A feature of this period was the outburst of the thrilling strains of the Laureate of the Cotton Panic, Samuel Laycock. Week by week he produced his cheering rhymes, some of which will live on so long as the dialect is spoken. His “ Surat Weaver’s Song ” is full of pathos and humour, two verses of which are as follows :

“Oh dear! iv yon’d Yankees could only just see  
 Heaw they ’re clammin’ an’ starvin’ poor wayvers like me,  
 Aw think they ’d soon settle ther’ bother, an’ strive  
 For ’t send us some cotton, to keep us alive.

-            -            -            -            -

Aw wish aw wur far enough off, eaut o’ th’ road,  
 For o’ weivin this rubbitch, aw’m gettin’ reet stowed,  
 Aw’ve nowt i’ this world to lie deawn on but straw,  
 For aw’ve only eight shillin’ this fornit to draw.”

Terrible indeed were the experiences of the working classes in Stalybridge during those dark days, and the effect *upon the manufacturers* may be imagined from the following return :—

The bankruptcies registered in the Court at Manchester, in the years 1861-4, were as follows :—

1861	..	..	..	..	175
1862	..	..	..	..	370
1863	..	..	..	..	261
1864	..	..	..	..	387

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1,192

The future was obscured for the capitalists, the picture grew darker and darker, until even the most sanguine lost heart. The financial interests which some of our local magnates were said to have in the Confederate cause vanished like chaff before the wind, until the inevitable crash involved in its debris the ambitions and fortunes of the speculators. "The cotton trade had gone—never to return," the approach of ruin became apparent, and the flower of local enterprise was nipped in the bud beyond a possibility of recovery. Clever, shrewd, gifted, and of undoubted business capacity, their future prospects were closed; they bravely accepted and faced their positions, and calmly, quietly—with unsubdued independency of spirit—marched on to the end.

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## Chapter 4.

The Bread Riots—Arrival of the Hussars—Reading of the Riot Act—Wholesale Arrests and Convictions—Arrival of Infantry with fixed Bayonets—More Cavalry—The use of the Cutlass—Meeting of Operatives—Settlement.

"Ere ye strike, my brethren pause,  
Violence will never aid your cause."

*Anon.*

**T**HE cause of the "Bread Riots" was the decision of the "Relief Committee" to substitute a system of "relief by ticket" instead of money. These tickets were to be presented at the local grocers' shops, where goods to the amount would be supplied.

An organised resistance began, which culminated on Friday, the 20th March, 1863, in the commencement of one of the darkest pages in the town's history.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, a noisy crowd gathered about the entrance to Mr. Bates's mill, in Castle Street. A small force of police was present, guarding the mill doors and endeavouring to keep order. The crowd indulged in shouting, and jeered the police. Eventually a stone was thrown which hit one of the constables, who endeavoured to arrest the person who had thrown it. In an instant a shower of missiles were hurled at the police, who in their turn charged the mob. Brickbats, stones, and other articles were thrown, and several prisoners who had been captured were rescued, and the police driven from the place.

The mob now made for the residence of Mr. Bates, on Cocker Hill, “ where the windows were smashed and the furniture broken by stones. . . . Mrs. Bates (Mr. Bates's mother) lay ill in bed, and the assault upon her house hastened, if it did not cause, her death.”

Another section of the rioters visited the “ Relief Stores,” near the Wellington Inn, Caroline Street, where they smashed the windows and looted the buildings. “ Not satisfied with these appropriations, some villain made an attempt (happily unsuccessful) to fire the premises.”

The vivid accounts which our townsmen still give of the affair have lost none of their detail by the lapse of time.

The alarm had been given, and after a lapse of about two hours, a shout rent the air: "The soldiers are coming," followed by the clattering of the hoofs of a troop of Hussars from Manchester. The police, under the cover of the soldiers, arrested many of the ringleaders at once, and before the night was over about eighty prisoners had been taken to the Town Hall.

The Mayor, Dr. Hopwood, together with David Harrison Esq., J.P., accompanied the military, The latter gentleman read the Riot Act, amidst the yells and jeers of the mob.

On the Saturday morning, the eighty prisoners were brought before the magistrates, and twenty-nine of them were committed to Chester for trial. Warning placards were posted on the walls of the town calling attention to the fact that the Riot Act had been read, yet the removal of the prisoners from the Town Hall to the Railway Station caused a renewal of the disturbance. Again the cavalry were to the fore, and the mob stoned them as they galloped through the streets. The representatives of the discontents sent a deputation to the Mayor, who asked them to wait until the following Monday. This was not sufficient, and from five o'clock until seven in the evening the town was in the hands of a reckless mob. The police were stoned whenever they appeared, but the soldiers were getting angry, and the rioters saw it, hence whenever the Hussars showed themselves the sight of their sabres was quite enough. At half-past eleven at night a company of Infantry arrived, and marched through the streets with bayonets

fixed, and about the same time another troop of cavalry rode into the town, but their active services were not needed ; the rioters kept good hours, and had retired for the night.

On the Sunday the streets were filled with people from the neighbouring towns and villages. The rioters did not appear.

Monday morning came, and rumours of further trouble began to be heard. About one o'clock the disturbances commenced again, the scene being Stanley Square, and the police made a charge with drawn cutlasses, blood being shed. The sight of blood had a great effect upon the mob, and the police led off their prisoners unmolested.

On Tuesday, the 24th March, a great meeting was held on the Plantation Ground (where the Market Hall now stands), a chairman was appointed, and a deputation elected to wait upon the Mayor, requesting him to give them relief in money instead of tickets. The Mayor promised to give them his reply at one o'clock.

At that hour a concourse of three thousand starving operatives stood waiting for a reply.

The chairman said that the Mayor's answer was that " it was no longer a question of tickets or money, but of mastership," and they were advised to return to their various schools. The general opinion was that the Mayor and Mr. J. Cheetham, M.P., would take up their cause, and that the ticket system would not last long. The men looked at each other, and the upshot was that " a resolution to return to the schools and accept

tickets for the past and present weeks was unanimously adopted." With the passing of that resolution a light succeeded the gloom which had been present on three thousand faces. Men shook hands with each other, and the chairman, who stood in a cart which had acted as platform, addressed the meeting something like the following: "Now, my lads, in th' Houses of Parliament it's awlus a law that th' majority rules; so let it be wi' us. All of yo' go to yo're schools, and let no man be missing when th' names are called i'th' morning." The crowd broke up amidst shouts of "Hurrah!" "Bravo!" "Th' riot 's done," &c. A group of girls who had been at the meeting, met some soldiers loitering in the street, and one of them, clapping one of the Hussars on the shoulder, said "Aye, owd chap, theau con go whoam; th' riot 's done."

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## Chapter 5.

The Central Executive Relief Committee, Manchester, and the Operatives of Stalybridge—The Sewing Classes and Schools—The Return of “ King Cotton ”—The memorable 27th June, 1864—“ Hard times come again no more ’—Cotton Return, February 7th, 1865.

“ The darkest hour is on the verge of day.”

*John Critchley Prince.*

**T**HE following address was printed, issued and posted on the walls in Stalybridge, March 27, 1863 :—

*“ The Central Executive Relief Committee at Manchester.*

“ TO THE OPERATIVES OF STALYBRIDGE AND  
THEIR FAMILIES.

“ We have been entrusted with large funds for the relief of distress, and we are distributing them with every sympathy for your wants, and with every care for your welfare : those funds cannot be claimed by any particular district, but are to be given where we think it best, taking into consideration distress, good behaviour, and local circumstances generally.

“ We deplore the disturbances which have recently occurred. We hope they are not shared in by a large number. If they are continued, we know that there are many elsewhere who will gratefully receive all we can afford them ; and the Boards of Guardians, the ordinary channels of relief, are always open to others.

“ We therefore appeal to all among you who value our relief, to aid us in our wish to continue it to you. We beg you, consequently, to avoid and discourage meetings which may lead to disturbances, and to assist, to the utmost of your power, the local authorities and others, whose duty is the preservation of order for the good of all.

“ We deeply sympathise in your distress ; none of us know how long it will last. We must, therefore, be prudent in distributing that relief which the generosity of the public has given, but which disturbance will cause to cease. Unless order is duly preserved, matters must pass from our hands into those of the constituted authorities of the country.

“ Signed for the Committee,

“ JAMES P. KAY SHUTTLEWORTH,

“ *Vice-President.*

“ JOHN WILLIAM MACLURE,

“ *Honorary Secretary.*

The ladies of Stalybridge rendered excellent service in connection with the various sewing-classes which were organised for the female operatives.

It may be interesting to know that during this period Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone visited the town, and were the guests of Robert Platt, Esq. Mrs. Gladstone went to several of the sewing-classes, and expressed surprise and



delight at the excellent needlework and knitting done by the scholars. Mr. Gladstone went through some of the schools where the male operatives were being taught. A writer of the time deals with the school system as follows :—“ The disciplinary work, mental or physical, found by relief committees for their dependents answered very well until the novelty had worn off, and then it became almost as unsatisfactory as pauper or prison-labour. . . . The natural and almost inevitable consequence was, that men worked not as at a task for the accomplishment of which they would be rewarded according to their exertions, but listlessly, waiting like tired children at school for the hour of dismissal ; knowing that the connection between the work done and the relief-wages to be procured was not a natural but a forced relationship—a make-believe, which produced no sympathy, and therefore no fruitful result.”

### THE RETURN OF KING COTTON.

In the early months of 1864 a perceptible return of trade was apparent. The Northern States had got the upper hand, the cause of the South was doomed. As a finale to his brilliant record, President Lincoln called on the 18th July, 1864, for 500,000 Volunteers, for 1, 2, or 3 years' service, to which there responded 204,568 men, a large number being of Lancashire extraction. The operatives of Stalybridge had friends and relatives fighting beneath the flag of the Union, and even to this day there are in the town several grey-haired veterans who are in receipt of well-

earned recognition from the American Government for their services under the "Star-spangled Banner."

The newspapers of those days are full of communications from the battle-fields. By degrees the engines and machinery of several mills were overhauled, ready for the cotton, when it came. The spring of 1864 came and went, summer had arrived, when the people of Stalybridge became aware of the fact that once again King Cotton was on his way.

For a period of two years scarcely a bale had entered the town, when on the 27th of June, 1864, a waggon-load of cotton passed through the streets on its way to North-end Mills.

Old men, strong young fellows, and little children followed the vehicle as it passed along with its valuable freight, and by the time it neared its destination a procession had formed. The climax was reached when the lurry arrived at the top of Knowl Street. The women from the village of North-end had sallied forth to meet the welcome material, and in their impetuosity would have taken the horses from the shafts and dragged the vehicle themselves.

The elders, however, persuaded them otherwise, and amidst cheers and shouts the lurry passed along. The women would not be denied the exhibition of their joy and delight, for a clothes-prop was obtained on which a large coloured handkerchief was fastened, and then fixed on the top of the cotton bales.

The news spread like wildfire, and hundreds of operatives visited North - end Mill, to see if the information was correct.

During the day the excitement increased until faces that had not smiled for many weary months, and hearts that had been long sad, became merry for a little while. Singing was heard in many cottage homes that night, and as for the residents of North-end, it is not recorded whether they retired to rest that evening or not.

In the course of few days other consignments of cotton arrived at various mills, and their unloading was celebrated in homely fashion. In one part of the town the women organised a “ tay-party,” and as the celebration wore on, and the shadows fell, from many of the cottage interiors there were heard issuing the strains of the then familiar song :

“ Many days you have linger'd around my cabin door,  
Oh! hard times, hard times, come again no more.”

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NOTE.—The increase in the supply of American Cotton, and the decrease in the imports from the East Indian, Chinese, and Japanese growers was apparent immediately the war terminated, as foreshadowed by the following quotation.

“ In the *Manchester Guardian*, February 7th, 1865, the weekly deliveries of cotton from Liverpool are given as under :—

			First four weeks in 1865. Bales.		First four weeks in 1863. Bales.
American	..	..	1,560	..	940
Brazil	..	..	1,500	..	1,360
Egyptian	..	..	3,940	..	2,600
West Indian	..	..	410	..	120
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			7,500		5,020
East Indian, China and Japan	..	..	10,230	..	12,290
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			17,730	..	17,310 ”





## PART V.

### THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF THE TOWN IN BRIEF.

Old St. George's, Cocker Hill—St. Paul's, Stayley—St. George's, The Hague—Holy Trinity Church—St. James' Church, Millbrook—Christ Church—Chapel Street School—The People's School—The Wesleyans—The General Baptists—The Ebenezer Baptists, Cross Leech Street—Heyrod Union Sunday School—The Primitive Methodists—The Congregationalists—The Methodist New Connexion Chapel—St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church—United Methodist Free Church—The Unitarians—The Gospel Mission Hall, Kay Street.

“I am fond of loitering about country churches . . . . I do not pretend to be what is called a devout man, but there are feelings that visit me in a country church which I experience nowhere else; and if not a more religious, I think I am a better man on Sunday, than on any other day of the seven.”

*Washington Irving.*

**T**HE natives of Stalybridge in bygone times worshipped at the ancient churches of Ashton-under-Lyne and Mottram, within whose burial grounds will be found many weather and foot-worn memorials bearing local names. There is little trace of any place of worship having existed here prior to the inauguration of St. George's Church. A local tradition says that a

Moravian Settlement was located at Rassbottom prior to the advent of that body at Dukinfield. A noted family named Swanwick, who were Moravians, gave their name to Swanwick Clough.

### OLD ST. GEORGE'S, COCKER HILL.

The origination of this church dates from the 24th October, 1772, when a Requisition and Promissory Deed was drawn up and duly signed. This document is not mentioned either in Aiken or Butterworth. The writer obtained a copy of the deed several years ago, and Captain Bates recently discovered the original parchment, which he generously restored to the representatives of the church, where it may now be seen.

The first church was erected in 1776, but being defective, collapsed on the 15th May, 1778. The second building is the one which is still remembered, and was closed as being unsafe for public worship, about Christmas time, 1882. The present church was erected on the same site, and was opened on the 21st March, 1888.

The ancient burial ground was formerly surrounded by a low parapet wall with flat coping stones, upon which many of our now aged townspeople scampered and played in bygone times. This practice was put a stop to, and the privacy of the old sepulchres ensured, when Robert Platt, Esq., at his sole cost, erected the iron palisading now existing. The ashes of many well-known families rest within the stony bosom of

the old graveyard. The ancestors of the Platts, the Halls, the Walton-Mellors, and the Masons, were buried here. The graves of Bradbury, the father of the explorer, of the Whiteheads, and the Taylors may be noticed, whilst the dust of musicians, lawyers, cotton masters, and innkeepers now mingles, under the foot of the visiting pilgrim.

Inside the church are numerous memorials to the memory and worth of departed townspeople and past vicars. The register of births and deaths contains much valuable data, from the year 1777. The cost of the present church is recorded as about £5,000, and the organ over £700.

The list of past vicars and curates includes the names of—

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Rev. John Kenworthy           | 2 Rev. J. Cape-Atty |
| 3 Rev. I. N. France             | 4 Rev. J. E. Leeson |
| 5 Rev. J. B. Jelly-Dudley, B.A. |                     |

The present vicar is the Rev. Herbert Hampson, M.A. Excellent Day and Sunday Schools exist in connection with the church.

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### ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, STAYLEY.

This Parish was formed from the Parish of Mottram-in-Longdendale about 1837. The site on which the church was erected was given by the Earl of Stamford

A list of subscribers with the various amounts is in existence, from which we quote the principal donations, as follows :—

James Wilkinson....£200	James Adshead ..£200
Robert Platt.... £200	Lord Stamford ..£200
William Harrison..£100	Abel Harrison ...£100
David Harrison ...£100	George Adshead .£100
John Wagstaffe ...£100	James Hall.....£100
Ralph Hall .....£100	James Bayley....£100
William Wareing....£100	The Misses Evans £100
Aaron Adshead ...£100	James Buckley ..£150
David Cheetham .. £50	William Lees ....£100
John Leech ..... £50	Ralph Howard ..£102 10s.
John Cheetham .. £50	James Howard .. £70
John Lees .....£100	Rev. Mr. Evans . £50
Wm. Bayley & Bros. £50	William Bardsley. £50

The foundation stone of the church was laid February 2nd, 1838; the building was completed and consecrated October 9th, 1839. The first services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Evans, prior to the arrival of the Rev. W. W. Hoare. A fine peal of bells and a clock were placed in the tower of the church in 1851. The church was enlarged in 1874, when the following handsome sums were given towards the cost :—

Thomas Harrison, Esq. £850	James Buckley, £800
J. J. Wilkinson, Esq. £630	Ralph Bates, Esq. £500

The vicars since the church's formation have been



as follows :—

Rev. W. W. Hoare, B.D.,	1840-1869.
Rev. J. M. Cranswick, D.D.,	1869-1880.
Rev. Canon R. H. Brown, M.A.,	1880-1887.
Rev. T. H. Sheriff, M.A.,	1887-

The church contains many beautiful memorial windows and tablets. The register dates from 1842. The organ cost £1,800, and the total cost of the church is estimated at £12,000. There is in existence a very well written and detailed account of the rise and progress of this church.

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### ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, THE HAGUE.

This church was built, and consecrated July 30th, 1840, and its cost is recorded as £6,000, its organ costing an additional £700. Formerly there was a gallery in the building, which was taken down some years ago.

The church was restored in 1885, and re-seated in 1889. There is ample seating accommodation for a congregation of 1,000 persons. Situated in one of the pleasantest localities in the district, it is within easy distance of its parishioners.

Within its walls are several beautiful memorials to past worshippers, whilst in the confines of its burial ground the visitor will notice numerous tributes to bygone celebrities. The soldiers quartered at the local depôt formerly attended Divine service at this church,

and a noticeable feature in the graveyard is a row of grass-grown mounds beneath which lie the remains of many forgotten warriors.

The list of vicars at this church includes the following names :—

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Rev. Isaac Newton France | 2 Rev. W. Hale              |
| 3 Rev. J. E. Leeson        | 4 Rev. F. Leeson            |
| 5 Rev. J. H. Killick       | 6 Rev. H. J. Hutchinson     |
| 7 Rev. J. T. Read          | 8 Rev. T. M. Oldfield, M.A. |

Large and commodious Day and Sunday Schools are attached to the church.

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### HOLY TRINITY CHURCH.

The Parish of Castle Hall, or Holy Trinity, was formed about the year 1846. Its first vicar, the Rev. Thomas Floyd, B.A., was installed as incumbent in 1847. The first meetings in connection with the church were held in the cottage of Mrs. Simpson, in Back Grosvenor Street. Temporary rooms were afterwards obtained, and services were held in the Foresters' Hall. The foundation stone of the church was laid on Easter Monday, 1851, when a procession and other ceremonies took place. The church was opened on the 27th June, 1852, and consecrated in the October following. The executors of Miss Jane Cook, of Cheltenham, conveyed to the benefice of Holy Trinity Church the handsome sum of £1,666. Numerous gifts from various ladies

and gentlemen are fully acknowledged in the well written annals of the church.

In 1853 a fine peal of bells was placed in the tower, the cost being £500, which was defrayed by voluntary subscriptions.

The excellent Day and Sunday Schools in connection with this place of worship were completed in 1853.

The first vicar of Holy Trinity, the Rev. Thomas Floyd, B.A., died on the 4th April, 1875. His successor, the Rev. Fielding Ould, died as the result of an accident, October 17th, 1881. The present vicar, the Rev. Charles Sutcliffe, succeeded, and preached his first sermon on Sunday, January 18th, 1882.

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### ST. JAMES' CHURCH, MILLBROOK.

St. James' Church, Millbrook, is an off-shoot of St. Paul's, Stayley. The commencement of Church of England work in the village was the opening of a branch school by the Rev. Mr. Hoare, about the year 1848. A substantial building was erected, and Day and Sunday Schools established, services being held every Sunday evening. In the early sixties a scheme for the erection of a church was conceived, which obtained the substantial support of Abel Harrison, Esq., of Highfield House, Stalybridge. Financial aid was forthcoming and the proposed church became a reality.

St. James' Church, Millbrook, was consecrated for Divine Service on the 29th January, 1863, at which time there was assigned to it a district as a separate parish, the Rev. W. H. White being appointed as its first vicar. He was succeeded by the Rev. Richard Salkeld, who was afterwards followed by the present vicar, the Rev. F. L. Farmer, M.A., now in the 26th year of his stewardship.

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### CHRIST CHURCH.

The formation of this, the youngest church in the town, was the act of a few working-men, who commenced a School, and held meetings in a small room situated off Quarry Street, Stalybridge. The project grew and flourished until the School thus formed encouraged its founders to aspire and to formulate a scheme by which they might become possessed of a School building of their own. A site was procured, plans were drawn, and, eventually, their ideal became a reality.

The edifice was used as a School Church, and was dedicated on the 19th April, 1873.

The first curate was the Rev. Charles Sutcliffe, who was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Langbridge, who in his turn was followed by the Rev. James Grant Bird, the present Vicar, now in the 30th year of his work at this church.

The important dates in connection with this place of worship are thus recorded :—

Foundation Stone of Church laid 23rd September, 1877.

Consecration Service, 21st May, 1879.

The cost of the Church was £3,500.

In the year 1882, and again in 1887, important enlargements and additions were made to the Schools.

The register dates from 1878. The seating accommodation is adequate for 800 persons.

The present satisfactory condition of this Church and the Schools connected with it are a monument to the energy, tact, and popularity of the present Vicar, who has spent the very best years of his life in furthering the welfare of his people and his flock.

The latest addition is a new Infant School, which was erected at a cost of £1,500, and opened in 1902.

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### CHAPEL STREET SCHOOL.

This School was originated by Robert Platt and Thomas Broadbent, in a very humble manner. These men started their project—viz., that of forming a Sunday School—“in a house in the wood,” which was situated at the top of Wood Street. A third person, named Robert Kershaw, now joined the scheme, and the idea flourished and grew until it became necessary to migrate successively to other quarters—viz., a portion

of a smithy, belonging to John Lunn, in Harrop Street ; Tongue's Garret, in Prow Street ; the garret above the Hope and Anchor ; and eventually Judson's Assembly Room, which was located above the " King's Head Inn," then situate two doors from the Wheat Sheaf Inn, King Street. On the erection of the Methodist New Connexion Chapel in Rassbottom Street, in 1802, the Sunday School went thither. The site on which the chapel stood was sold to raise funds for a larger building in Chapel Street.

On the 24th June, 1815, the foundation stone of the new School was laid. At that time it was an undenominational school, but as the other religious bodies in the town began to have their own schools, the Chapel Street School became recognised as the property of the New Connexionists, and in 1821 a Board of Trustees was formed, composed of the following persons :—John Higginbottom, James Harrop, Joseph Shepley, Joseph Wrigley, William Wrigley, Robert Kershaw, John Tongue, Nathaniel Buckley, John Nield, Joseph Knott, John Schofield, John Howard, Thomas Lees, Abdiel Berry, Joseph Tongue, Joseph Roberts, Joshua Platt, John Whitworth, Samuel Platt, Daniel Saxon, James Swallow, Neddy Shelmerdine, and Thomas Mason.

In the year 1845, a Jubilee of the formation of the School was held, when a medal was presented to Mr. Robert Kershaw, as the surviving founder, and for his services in connection with the school. In 1856, another Board of Trustees was formed, as follows :—Thomas

Mason, Abdiel Berry, Samuel Platt, Iowerth Davis, John Hilton, John Ashmore, R. Winterbottom, senr., R. Winterbottom, junr., Henry Birch, William Bright, T. A. S. Saxon, George Blakeley, James Moore, Allen Wilde, Samuel McQuire, Thomas Worth, R. P. Whitworth.

The present School was erected on the site of its predecessor, the foundation-stone being laid by Thomas Mason, Esq., of Audenshaw Hall, July, 1867, and was opened by Hugh Mason, Esq., of Groby Lodge, April 16th, 1868. The estimated cost was about £1,750.

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### THE PEOPLE'S SCHOOL.

This building was erected by the friends, supporters, and admirers of the Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens, about the year 1839. It was intended for Divine Worship and for Sunday School work, and was also used as a Day School. Evening classes were held during the week nights, and the School also became famous for its periodical entertainments, known as "Dramatic Recitals." The declining years of the founder, and the thinning of the ranks of his followers by the hand of death, caused the institution to wane. It was ultimately acquired by the Holy Trinity Church, and is now used as a Mission Hall in connection with that place of worship, and has accommodation for 500 persons.

## THE WESLEYANS.

The Wesleyans were in existence in Stalybridge as a religious sect prior to the year 1800. From the time when the Rev. John Wesley preached at Staley Hall, December 7th, 1745, and again on Sunday, May 11th, 1747, when he spoke, as is supposed, from Rassbottom Cross, the village received regular visitations from Wesleyan preachers. In 1762 there existed a Society of Wesleyans, at Higham Fold, the site of which was obliterated in the construction of Mellor Road.

In 1805 a Wesleyan Meeting Room existed near the Angel Inn, Rassbottom, from whence the worshippers went to "Holden's Garret," Cocker Hill. The first Wesleyan Chapel, in Caroline Street, was opened in 1815, and enlarged in 1827 at a cost of £400. A branch place of worship was formed on Cocker Hill, and a suitable chapel built in 1864 in Blandford Street, then known as Portland Street. This building was sold to the Presbyterians in 1869, who used it for some years. It is now known as Hartley Works, and is the property of Messrs. Dawson and Co., Engineers. The present Wesleyan Chapel, Caroline Street, was built in 1872, and cost about £4,000. It contains an organ which cost £700.

The Sunday School was held first in the old chapel, and appears to have been formed about 1820. In the year 1825 the Canal Street School was built; great improvements and additions have been made in recent years.

There is a well written history of the local Wesleyans in booklet form.



## GENERAL BAPTISTS.

The date of the recorded establishment of the Baptist denomination in Stalybridge is given as 1806, when a Mr. Barker, who claimed to belong to the sect, settled in the village. In the same year, he publicly immersed nine people in the reservoir which supplied the Old Woollen Mill, near the Pack Horse Inn, Old Street. The services were held in a garret on Cocker Hill at that time; afterwards the worshippers removed to a smithy near Rassbottom. The first chapel was erected in 1819. It contained a gallery at one end. The building is still in existence, being used at present as a skip shop. In 1842, another chapel was built in Cross Street, which was found to be in the direct line of the railway. The chapel and graveyard were sold to the Railway Company and demolished, the remains being conveyed to the present burial ground at Wakefield Road.

The Baptists held services in the Foresters' Hall for a time, until their present chapel, "Mount Olivet," was built. The Foundation Stone was laid June 25th, 1846. The opening services took place March 8th, 1848. An organ was placed in the building in 1865, which cost £320, succeeded in 1906 by another large organ as a centenary memorial. Its list of pastors is as follows:—

A. Barker . . . . . 1806–1814	Rev. W. Evans . . . . . 1864–1871
Rev. W. Pickering 1816–1819	Rev. E. K. Everett 1872–1876
Rev. R. Abbott . . . . . 1821–1825	Rev. S. Skingle . . . . . 1876–1879
Rev. T. Smith . . . . . 1826–1843	Rev. C. Rushby . . . . . 1881–
Rev. J. Sutcliffe . . . . . 1844–1862	

The cost of the Chapel was about £2,000, and is built on freehold land.

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### EBENEZER BAPTISTS, CROSS LEECH STREET.

Originally part of the General Baptist community, this branch left the establishment in Cross Street, became known as "The Particular Baptists," and took up their quarters in a room known as "Myles Schofield's Garret," Old Street. The only means of access to the "Garret" (which is still in existence, as a photographic gallery) was across a foot-bridge, which connected the building with the steep brow-side of Cocker Hill.

Although the locality is much changed since that time, these facts have been verified by old residents.

As the cause of the "Ebenezers" grew, the accommodation of the garret was not sufficient, and an offer being made by a local gentleman to erect a building for the purpose of Divine Worship, the ambitious and trusting people accepted the offer, and King Street Chapel, known as Mount Zion, was built in 1824. A disagreement arose between the Baptists and the owner of the Chapel, the result being that the worshippers migrated to Castle Hall, and built their present chapel, in Cross Leech Street, about 1836. The cost of the Chapel and Schools is given as £1,750. In 1906 the addition of an organ, and its dedication to the memory

of the late Rev. A. Bowden and his wife, was a memorable event. The following is a list of the Pastors at this place since its formation :—

Rev. C. Morrell. . . 1827-1842	Rev. J. Ash . . . 1846-1868
Rev. A. North . . . 1869-1874	Rev. C. Evans . . . 1874-1876
Rev. H. C. Field. 1879-1883	Rev. A. Bowden 1886-1900
Rev. E. Peake . . . 1900-1904	

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### HEYROD UNION SUNDAY SCHOOL.

This School originated, according to its annals, from a number of persons who were connected with Chapel Street School, which was originally a School for all denominations. About the year 1817, the idea of forming a school at Heyrod asserted itself, "and on the 9th February of that year the Heyrod Union Sunday School for the first time opened its doors to all denominations."

The school was held in "a cellar—dark, damp, and uncomfortable." After a little while, fresh quarters were found, "these consisted of the two rooms of a cottage, situated at a place known by the classic name of Troy." According to the traditions of the school, "in religious sentiment the founders were chiefly Methodists, but, strongly attached as they were to their own community, they yet had the discernment to perceive that a School founded exclusively for denominational interests was not likely to command

that support, which, in a small place like Heyrod, was necessary to carry it on with success. The school was consequently started on the widest ground of Christian toleration. No creeds were imposed, and no questions asked as to faith and doctrine, but all who were willing to labour for the common good were freely welcomed."

The project flourished and grew, until the pioneers and their friends began to think about possessing a school of their own; their ideal being realised, when, "on the 9th of September, 1819, the new school was opened without any ceremony."

The donations of the teachers, scholars, and friends, ranged from the modest 6d. to the handsome sum of £10 10s.; the number of subscribers was 171. A "deed" bearing the date of October 31st, 1821, contains the names of the following persons, who were appointed the first Board of Trustees of the Heyrod Union Sunday School:—Neddy Shelmerdine, William Lawton, William Mills, James Lawton, Robert Lawton, Luke Lawton, James Schofield, James Worsnip, James Shelmerdine, Robert Kershaw, John Hurst, Robert Shelmerdine, John Lawton, Joseph Mills, James Norris, Joseph Roberts, Samuel Buckley, William Robinson, Samuel Schofield, Joshua Holt.

The second Board of Trustees was appointed 30th July, 1849; the third, 20th May, 1876; the fourth and present Trustees were appointed 17th November, 1906.

The Sunday School celebrated its Jubilee on the 9th February, 1867. The important dates in its history are chronicled as follows: Established 1817. School built, 1819. Enlarged 1868. The return given in the History of Lancashire, 1825, is as follows: "Heyrod School, scholars, 238; teachers, 80."

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### THE PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.

The Primitive Methodist body has been in existence just over a hundred years, having had its origin at a place called Mow Cop, a prominent mountain and land-mark on the borders of Cheshire and Staffordshire.

Its advent into Stalybridge occurred during the first quarter of last century. The earliest recorded meeting-room was a garret near Rassbottom, which, from the association of the Primitive Methodists, became known, locally, as "Ranter's Court."

Services were held regularly in the year 1827, and five or six years later (1833) the little chapel in Grasscroft Street, with its small burial ground fronting Canal Street, was erected. For nearly sixty years the building served the requirements of the worshippers as chapel and school, and still forms part of the present structure.

In 1892 the existing chapel was built, and is a lasting credit to the energy of the worshippers; the addition

of a powerful organ adds to the musical part of the services. The cost of the chapel was £1,800.

The transformation of the building, erected in 1833, has resulted in the provision of a commodious assembly room, and a number of smaller apartments which are used as class-rooms, etc.

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### THE CONGREGATIONALISTS.

The Independents or Congregationalists began to be known in Stalybridge about 1823-4, at which period a number of them followed the Particular Baptists in the occupation of "Myles Schofield's garret," as they also did a few years later in the tenancy of Mount Zion, or King Street Chapel.

The Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, of Ashton-under-Lyne, preached in private houses in 1826-7. In 1830 the denomination began to increase, and formed a church in 1831. For about four years they worshipped in King Street Chapel, and in 1834 secured a site on the Cheshire side of the river, where they built a chapel of their own, which was opened on Sunday, May 25th, 1835, "with a public prayer meeting, at seven o'clock in the morning." It is described as measuring "45 feet by 50," the cost being £1,500.

The present church was erected on the same site, and opened in 1861, at a cost of £5,000.

The principal subscriptions were as follows:—

	£		£
John Cheetham, Esq.	1166	Messrs. Benson ..	270
John Knott, Esq. ..	300	Miss Churchill ..	250
Mr. Kirk .. .. .	200	J. F. Cheetham, Esq.	165
Miss Cheetham .. ..	140	Miss Berry .. ..	120
Mrs. Cheetham's class	130	G. H. Benson ..	75

The Sunday School was built in 1851, and was replaced by the present commodious buildings in 1906.

Ministers of the Church since its formation:—

Rev. G. Hoyle	.. 1830-1842
Rev. F. C. Douthwaite	.. 1844-1847
Rev. R. Roberts	.. 1847-1853
Rev. J. C. McMichael	.. 1853-1855
Rev. J. H. Gwyther, B.A.	.. 1857-1869
Rev. J. Williamson, M.A.	.. 1870-1879
Rev. H. W. Holder, M.A.	.. 1880-1884
Rev. G. E. Cheeseman	.. 1885-1900
Rev. G. S. Walker	.. 1902-1906
Rev. A. E. Taylor	.. 1907-

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## METHODIST NEW CONNEXION CHAPEL.

About the year 1829-30 it is recorded that a "lawyer," named Mr. Bennett, took a piece of land near Grosvenor Square for the purpose of erecting thereon a first-class house, which was to stand in its own grounds. The present Bennett Street formed the

boundary of one side of the plot, and was named after the purchaser of the land. The basement, cellar excavations, and foundations for the structure were almost completed when Mr. Bennett died, and the project collapsed.

The Methodist New Connexionists bought the land as it was, and erected the present commodious chapel in 1831. On the completion of the building a strange rumour was circulated that the gallery was not safe, and people would not sit in it. The officials endeavoured to prove its stability by placing scores of tons of iron in it, as a test of its security ; seventy-five years have passed since that incident, and the gallery stands rigid and firm to-day.

Bennett Street School was next built, and has served at different periods as a Day and Night school, as well as for its original purpose—that of a Sunday school.

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### ST. PETER'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

From a rare and scarce pamphlet, printed in King Street, Stalybridge, we glean the following particulars : “ On Wednesday, the 25th of September, a splendid Catholic Church, recently erected in Stalybridge, and dedicated to St. Peter, was consecrated by the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, Bishop of the Northern District of England. This sacred edifice has been to a considerable extent raised by the voluntary contributions of the



operative Catholics in this town and neighbourhood, aided by the liberal subscriptions of their Protestant brethren of various denominations." The consecration sermon was delivered in an eloquent and impressive manner by Dr. Wiseman, Principal of the English College at Rome, afterwards well known as Cardinal Wiseman. "At three o'clock, a banquet was held in the Stalybridge Town Hall, Thomas Ellison, Esq., of Glossop Hall, presided; John Leech, Esq., acted as vice-president." Thirty clergymen of the Catholic faith were present, and about a hundred laymen, amongst whom were Abel Harrison, Esq., William Bayley, Esq., Henry Bayley, Esq., C. Bayley, Esq., Dr. Potter, John Wagstaffe, Esq., Henry Lees, Esq., Mr. Ockleshaw, etc. Notable speeches were made, and a memorable gathering passed pleasantly over. The date of the erection of the church is given as 1838, the cost being about £5,000.

A beautiful oil painting was presented to this church by Henry Lees, Esq., Solicitor, of this town, and is still in existence.

The following are the names of the principal Rectors who have been in charge of this church since its formation: Rev. J. K. Anderton, Rev. Canon Egan, Rev. Canon Hilton, Rev. Canon Carrol, Rev. Dr. O'Toole, Rev. Father Ryder, Rev. Father O'Grady.

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## UNITED METHODIST FREE CHURCH.

This denomination was, and is still, spoken of as "Bobby Kershaw's," the name arising from the fact that Mr. Robert Kershaw was one of the first promoters, if not the actual founder. The body first originated in a very humble way, and held its meetings in a small room off Quarry Street, which has done service in similar fashion upon other occasions. The little Sunday school progressed, until, about the year 1849, the idea of building a home, or Sunday school and church, asserted itself. The result was that by hard work and combination the present Booth Street chapel was erected. The project was ambitious, and for many years the struggling Methodists had a keen fight for existence.

In 1877 the re-modelling and renovation of the structure was carried out, the cost amounting to nearly £2,800.

Seating accommodation for 250 worshippers is provided. The church contains an organ which cost £150.

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## THE UNITARIANS.

The movement was inaugurated in Stalybridge in 1860. The pioneers were John Jackson, Joshua Cartwright, Joseph Greenwood, Joseph Oliver, John Howard, Samuel Hurst, and James Kerfoot. The school was opened in a very humble fashion, in a portion of Hob Hill House, on the 13th July, 1862.

The first officials consisted of a Board of three Directors—viz., John Jackson, George Garside, and Joseph Greenwood; James Kerfoot, secretary, and Joseph Oliver, treasurer.

The Sunday school progressed, and in the winter of 1865 a series of Sunday evening services were held in the Foresters' Hall.

The formation of the church dates from this time, and, as the number of worshippers increased, the People's Hall, Corporation Street, was selected for their purpose. The present church, in Canal Street, was erected, and opening services held in February, 1870. The site was given by Messrs. John and William Leech, together with £200; Mrs. and Miss Leech, £200; David Harrison, £50; Henry Bayley, £40; and Mr. Rupert Potter, £40. The total cost of the church was £1,163; cost of organ, £400.

The foundation-stone of the present schools, in Albert Square, was laid by William Leech, Esq., on Whit-Friday, May 18th, 1883, amidst great rejoicing. There is in existence a well written booklet, dealing with the inception and growth of this place of worship.

*Ministers :*

Rev. F. Revitt, 1867-1871. Rev. W. Harrison 1888-1904.  
Rev. A. Ashworth, 1872-1879. Rev. W. G. Price, 1904-  
Rev. J. Freeston, 1880-1888.

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## THE GOSPEL MISSION HALL, KAY STREET.

About the year 1883, Mrs. John Frederick Knott, of Staveleigh, formed a class, or Mothers' Meeting, which assembled in a room for which that lady had arranged at one of the local Coffee Taverns. The idea took root and grew, until it was found advisable to have a meeting-room for the little body of worshippers.

The first regular meeting-room was in a building situated below the line of the highway, near the Stamford Arms, and originally built for a currier's warehouse—the building has recently been demolished.

The "Mission-Room" prospered, and eventually migrated across the town to a building in Cross Leech Street, which is still spoken of by those who were connected with it as "The Little Mission."

After a stay in these premises for some years, a further move was made to "The Temperance Hall," where the work still prospers and thrives.

The name of Mrs. Knott will ever be remembered in connection with the Gospel Mission Hall and its work. Since the death of that lady, the work has been carried on by a committee of energetic and willing workers.

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The following particulars have been gleaned from a record printed in 1825 regarding the number of teachers and scholars attending the Sunday schools in Stalybridge at that period.

Methodist New Connexion ..	548	Scholars	63	Teachers
Old Connexion ..	480	..	100	..
General Baptists .. .. .	200	..	48	..
Particular Baptists .. .. .	180	..	34	..
Heyrod School .. .. .	238	..	80	..
Hydes School (New Connexion)	100	..	44	..
Established Church S. School.	160	..	26	..
			<hr/>	
Total ..	1906		395	

Sixteen years later, 1841, Butterworth published the following tables, in connection with the Sunday schools in Stalybridge:—

	1825	1831	1841
Episcopal Schools .. .. .	1	1	2
Dissenters .. .. .	4	5	7
Catholic .. .. .	0	0	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5	6	11
Scholars in Episcopal Schools ..	160	250	600
.. Dissenters .. .. .	1408	2375	2200
.. Catholic .. .. .	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1568	2625	3350





## PART VI.

### LOCAL GLEANINGS.

#### Chapter 1.

The Markets of Olden Times—List of Commissioners—Selecting the Site for the Market—Knowl Meadow and Hyde's Fold—The Contractors—The Market Steps—Fish-Market and Lock-ups—Stalybridge Market on Saturday night—The Victoria Market.

"The fascination is over; the hand of time and change has fallen upon it—the scene is faded."

*Richard Wright Procter.*

**T**HE "Market" or "Market Place," during the opening years of last century, was situated in the vicinity of the "Angel Yard," and when the annual "Wakes" came round, the customary booths, etc., were erected on the "Bowling Green," which belonged to the Angel Inn, and was situated where the Fire Station is now built. In the year 1828, "The Stalybridge Police Act, an Act for lighting, watching, and otherwise improving the town of Stalybridge, . . . for regulating the police, and erecting a Market Place within the said town," came into operation.

The first Board of Police Commissioners was composed of the following gentlemen:—John Cook, Edward Hadfield, Thomas Orrell, Joseph Hatton, Jeremiah Lees, George Platt, David Cheetham, David Harrison, James Bayley, James Adshead, Ralph Hall, Abel Bayley, Thomas Evans, John Leech, John Wagstaffe, John Vaudrey, Ralph Ousey, Henry Johnson, William Bardsley, George Booth, James Hall.

The task of selecting a site for the proposed Market was well discussed, there being a division of opinion as to whether “Hyde’s Fold” or “Knowl Meadow” should be chosen. “Hyde’s Fold” was situated on the plot immediately in front of the “old market entrance,” in Market Street, and consisted of a typical Lancashire homestead—viz., The Village Inn, with its watering trough, the farrier’s smithy, and most likely, at one period, the necessary “stocks.”

The “Knowl Meadow” was a plot of low-lying ground, now covered by the range of stone houses, stretching from the Portland Place bridge to Knowl Street.

On the 22nd April, 1829, it was decided “that the said Market be fixed at ‘Hyde’s Fold,’ on the land leased to William Bardsley, belonging to Lord Stamford.”

The road known as Stamford Road had been recently constructed, and was called “Sheffield Road,” its course requiring the demolition of a building marked as “John Cook’s house,” which stood almost opposite the spot occupied by the present entrance to the Police Station.

On the 5th August, 1829, the Commissioners resolved "That a vote of thanks be presented to Lord Stamford for his valuable gift of land for the town's market."

On January 6th, 1830, a request was made to Messrs. Worthington and Nichols asking whether Lord Stamford would be willing to give the land opposite George Cook's (the Spread Eagle Inn) for a public building, provided the Market was fixed at "Hyde's Fold." On January 20th, 1830, the Commissioners decided "That the Market be fixed at 'Hyde's Fold,' and that land be obtained (if possible), either in Knowl Meadow or behind George Cook's house, for an additional Market, and to make up the 1,200 yards promised by Lord Stamford ; a deputation to wait upon Messrs. Worthington and Nichols for the purpose of obtaining Lord Stamford's approbation." Mr. Worthington declined, on behalf of Lord Stamford, to give the land.

The "Commissioners" now set to work, plans were made, old cottages bargained for, tenants compensated, and the buildings, etc., demolished ; thus Hyde's Fold passed away, and left the site for the proposed Market. Estimates for the work were solicited, and the contract given to a firm of Huddersfield builders, named Howard and Johnson, the sum agreed upon for the erection of the Town Hall and Market being £4,100. Mr. Peter Johnson was engaged to superintend the work on behalf of the "Commissioners," and was paid "one pound per week, on account."

On the 18th March, 1831, it was decided to make the addition to the original plans of "The Market



Steps," and at the same time "to put in a breast wall by the side of the river, bounding the site of the Market Place."

The "Town Hall and Market Place" were erected, and completed about the end of the year, and opened with great celebrations on December 31st, 1831, there being a procession through the town, in which "nine bands took part."

The first Market-keeper was John Oldham, who was a "watchman," his duties consisted of "sweeping and cleaning out the Market, attending the place throughout the daytime and keeping order. His salary was 12s. per week.

Several attempts were made towards the provision of a public clock, "to be lighted up with gas," which never resulted in anything being done.

On the 5th April, 1839, the "Commissioners" decided that a "Pound" or "Pin-fold" for strayed cattle, etc., should be provided in the "Pot yard," which it is presumed occupied the site of the old "Fish Market and Lock-ups."

The well-remembered Market-pump, and the grated openings which gave light and air to the passages and corridors underneath the Town Hall, were enclosed in 1843, when the "Fish Market and Lock-ups" were erected by a contractor named Briscoe, at a cost of £700. About 1864-5 there started an agitation for a new Market, and many schemes were proposed, the

principal one being that the buildings covering the site bounded by Market Street, and extending from King Street to Queen Street, should be purchased, and a Market erected in their place.

Another idea was "that the river should be spanned by iron girders, near the Town Hall, and a Market erected thereon." The result, finally, was the present Victoria Market, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the Mayor, James Sidebottom, Esq., on the 6th October, 1866, and opened to the public two years later, on Stalybridge Wakes Saturday, 18th July, 1868, by the Mayor, James Kirk, Esq.

There is in existence an old-time ballad, descriptive of "Stalybridge Market on Saturday night," which introduces many well-remembered characters, such as Mustard Jack, Morris Yacoby, Billy Peg-leg, and others, together with a description of the sights and sounds to be seen and heard. It was intended to include the verses in this volume, but space will not permit.

The following details in connection with the Victoria Market, etc., may be interesting:

Cost of erection of Market .. .. .	4500	0	0
Purchase of Land .. .. .	2118	6	8
Cost of Victoria Bridge .. .. .	1179	0	0
Cost of Retaining Wall on River Bank ..	446	0	0
Cost of Streets belonging to the Corporation	680	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total Cost	£8969	4	8
Fish Market, erected in 1881 .. .. .	1600	0	0
Present value said to be .. .. .	£12300	0	0

## Chapter 2.

Local Place-Names :—Flaggy Fields—New Town, the Piecer's Market—Wot-Hole Steps—The Old Hen-Cote—Sud Alley—Tabitha City—Waterloo—The Stumps—The Cock-pit.

“ All my early life being spent in . . . where I was bred, born, and schooled, I am naturally familiar with the scenes I have attempted to describe.”

*William Harrison Ainsworth.*

### FLAGGY FIELDS.

**A**T the junction of three roads, on the summit of Ridge Hill, there is a triangular plot, or open space, which tradition says, is or was the site of a “Gibbet.” It must be remembered that in the “olden times” a great part of the traffic into Yorkshire passed this way, and even within the memory of some of our townspeople, there was quite a number of old Inns and Beerhouses hereabouts—viz., “The Hare and Hounds,” which stood opposite to the large stone house near the quarry; the “Black Horse,” now known as “Clay Leeches”; and the “Old House at Home,” near the “Spinner’s Folly.” The wall-stile, known as “Flaggy-Fields stile,” will lead the pedestrian to a foot-path which crosses the pastures, and winds down the slope towards Heyrod, and there is a network of by-paths, which connected the homesteads of “Troy,” “Little London,” “Spout Brook,” and “Three-cornered Nook.” Three out of the four of these places have entirely disappeared of late years. The quaint, yet serviceable, path which gave the name to “Flaggy Fields” is believed to have been the work of “The Ouseys,” who

carried on a woollen manufactory at Ridge Hill and Heyrod, the idea being that the " flags " enabled the weavers to ascend and descend the slope with greater safety, as they bore their " pads " upon their shoulders. We still listen to the description of " Flaggy Fields " when their surfaces were gay with pale primrose blooms, whilst even yet, in the early part of the summer, the delicate fragrance of the wild hyacinths in the little wood on the slope is perceptible. From this spot the view, when the day is suitable, is extensive, the dale with its manufactories, and the sloping uplands of Stayley and Micklehurst stretching far away, until hemmed in by the purple moorlands. The following is quoted from the MS. of a well-known gentleman, and is very descriptive :

" These hills are the everlasting glories of Stalybridge, and almost identical in height and shape as they are I am always reminded, when I see them from Heyrod Road, of Rider Haggard's description of the mountains he calls ' Sheba's Breasts,' in his book ' King Solomon's Mines.' No two hills can be more like the swelling breasts of a fair woman than Wild Bank and Harridge. The former rises to 1,310 feet and the latter to 1,293 feet above sea-level, and both afford most magnificent views ; that from Wild Bank, when standing on the footpath which crosses its summit, is certainly hard to beat. When looking south, the fair valley of Longden-dale lies at our feet, and with its background of the Peak District hills forms a truly noble landscape. We see Kinder Scout (2,088 feet high), the loftiest eminence of the Pennine Range, nine miles away ; also the

conical peak of Axe Edge (1,807 feet), which lies  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-west of Buxton ; whilst, nearer home, the grey towers of Marple and Mottram churches, and the tall spire of Gee Cross, are easily visible, and even the Stockport churches may be seen with the naked eye when the atmosphere is clear.

“ North and west of our standpoint, and generally half hidden by a pall of smoke, lies the most densely populated and the richest district in the world. The best time to get a good view is late on a Sunday afternoon in the summer time, and preferably after rain has fallen, then, if you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of a sun-lit sea at Formby, near Southport, 45 miles away to the west, and occasionally one can make out the purple outlines of the Welsh mountains beyond Wrexham, in the south-west, nigh on 60 miles off.

“ Stalybridge may not be exactly a lovely town, but here at its very gates we have scenery of which one can never tire, and mountain air of the purest and most health-giving nature. I have been permitted to see many of the beauty spots of this earth in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and possibly I may be considered a bad judge, but in my eyes there is nothing in the wide world which surpasses the view from Wild Bank, looking south, when the heather is in bloom, and the sun is sinking in the west at the close of a summer's day. God has been very good to us in giving us this hill.”

The comparative heights of the neighbouring hills are : Hough Hill 800 feet, Hartshead Pike 800, Harrop

Edge 1,000, and Bucton 1,126 feet. Across the Lancashire plain the crest of Blackstone Edge is seen, and on a very clear day the heights of Rivington Pike (1,498 feet) can be detected. One hundred and twenty years ago the vales before us were filled with forest trees, no canal existed, no turnpike road, and no railway track ; then it was that the pack-horse and the rumbling stage-coach bore their respective freights along the dusty crest of Ridge Hill.

### “ NEW TOWN,” OR “ CASTLE HALL.”

The late Ralph Bates, Esq., once referred to the district of Castle Hall in a speech, and said, “ When I was a lad, and was sent an errand up Castle Hall, it was always spoken of as New Town. Castle Street and its approach were known as ‘ Paradise,’ and when a messenger was sent from this side by way of Castle Street, he was generally told to go up the ‘ Coach Road.’ ” This statement is interesting, because very few people were better acquainted with the town than he. The neighbourhood of Castle Street obtained the name of “ Paradise ” from the fact that prior to the establishment of the mills it was covered, as we are told, with “ orchards of fruit trees and corn fields, with here and there a farmer’s cottage.” The rapid development of trade and commerce swept all these associations into oblivion.

### THE PIECER’S MARKET.

It was the custom for unemployed operatives to assemble on the old Caroline Street bridge, and to wait

for the spinners needing piecers and scavengers. The bridge was built of brick, and consisted of a single arch which spanned the river ; on either side was a low stone parapet, just high enough to sit upon. The place could be seen from the numerous mills about, and if there was a piecer short anywhere it was a common thing for the spinner to look through the mill window to see if there were any "in the market." A case is recorded where the cotton master, passing through the spinning rooms, noticed a spinner being short-handed, and stripping off his coat he stepped into the jenny-room and took the spinner's place while that individual went to find a piecer.

#### WOT HOLE STEPS.

"Wot Hole steps" was a passage, or public road, to the river, and is now covered by the premises of the "Manchester and County Bank." Its name originated from the fact that there existed in the lower portion a trough or cistern, into which the condensed water from the steam engine at Hatchett's mill found its way. The water was used by the neighbours for domestic purposes. Hathett's, or Hatchett's mill, was situated on or near the site of Messrs. Brownson's shop. It was a building consisting of a cellar and three or four storeys. The engineer was the father of the late Mr. Alfred Nield, who, in addition to "minding the engine," was a shoemaker. It is recorded that the Kershaws, cotton spinners of Guide Bridge, commenced business at this place.

## THE OLD HEN COTE.

This mill was situated in Chapel Street, the site being now covered by a lodging-house. The building consisted of a basement and three or more storeys. It has been recorded that this was the site of the original "Bastile." In its latter days the place was used as a hat manufactory, and is well remembered because there was a public road which connected Chapel Street and Shepley Street, in a diagonal line, behind the old mill.

## SUD ALLEY.

The place known as Sud Alley was a narrow passage which led into Water Street from the rear of "Orrell's Mill." The reason for its title is said to have originated from the fact that a cistern, which was fed by the condensed water of the mill-engine, was used by the neighbours, some of whom took their washing and did it on the spot. In consequence of the amount of soap used there was a constant stream of water trickling towards Water Street, which was then known as "Dirty Street," and from this nuisance the passage became known as "Sud Alley."

## TABITHA CITY.

"Tabitha City" was the name given to a few cottages which existed in the rear of the new shops, near the King's Arms. The entrance to the place was along a very narrow passage, which was nearly opposite to Mr. Lees' Druggist's Shop. The ancient building, now known as the "Talbot Inn," was at one period the residence



of a cotton master, whilst another similar residence, with iron palisades in front of it, and an open space, occupied the site now covered by the "King's Arms." This house is described as being "in a lonely situation, surrounded by tall trees, through which the wind whistled at night, with nothing in front of it but trees and shrubs, which covered the sloping ground to the river's edge."

### WATERLOO.

The district known as "Waterloo" doubtless originated about 1816, and was at one period a very select neighbourhood. The slopes of the Hague were covered with trees, and the construction of the "Manchester and Holehouse Turnpike Road," now known as Wakefield Road, had not been thought about.

Three footpaths led from "Rassbottom" to the "Hague." The one now forming a portion of King Street was a private road; that which was transformed into a flight of steps is a continuation of Back King Street; and the one recently closed, which led from the "Red Lamp," to the "George Hotel" was public. The "George Hotel" was once the residence of John Wagstaffe, Esq. The large house near the Fire Station, now occupied by Mr. H. Stokes, was built by James Hall, Esq., of King Street Mills, and was, within the memory of many, a typical manufacturer's home. In front of it was a large plot filled with fruit trees, behind it a kitchen garden, which stretched up the hillside. The entrance to Mellor Brow was through a wicket gate. Even in our own time the front of the old house was

known as "Platt's Garden," where the spring blossoms whitened the thorn fences.

### THE STUMPS.

"The Stumps" were two sets of massive stone posts, which carried a "gallows-gate," on the upper edge of which was fixed a thick iron plate, into which was riveted a row of savage looking triangular spikes to prevent lads from swinging thereon. One set of these posts was fixed at the entrance to "Waterloo" proper; the other at the end of the short street which led to the "Bowling Green." There was no public road for vehicles direct from Market Street to King Street, or from Hadfield Street to King Street. The barriers were kept fastened with chains and padlocks. Prow Street, or Proud Street, now known as Half Street, was simply used by pedestrians.

### THE COCK PIT.

This place is situated near Messrs. Dawson's Works, off Stamford Street, and was notorious as the rendezvous of the lovers of "cock fighting." Tradition says that the magistrates determined to put a stop to the practice, and ordered a raid to be made at the first opportunity. The time arrived, and the sporting fraternity assembled in large numbers. A constable was sent to reconnoitre, but he returned breathless to his superior, with the intelligence that "All the big gentlemen in Stalybridge are there." There is no record of the raid being effected!

### Chapter 3.

Old Customs and Pastimes—Staley Wood Rush-Cart—Bull-Baiting—Peace-Egging—Bon-Fires—“ Past Ten o'clock ”—Well-Dressing.

“ Even in this lettered age, not all are lettered.”

#### THE STALEY WOOD RUSH CART.

**T**HE ancient festival of “ Rush Bearing ” was a time-honoured custom with the inhabitants of Stalybridge in the past. Scarcely had the “ Peace-eggers ” of Easter-tide laid their spangles and dresses aside, than the subject of choosing the dancers for escorting the Rush Cart was discussed. It was the unwritten law that the old dancers and musicians should act as tutors and teachers to the new ones. Aspirants were allowed to give a specimen of their abilities, and a system of “ practice neets ” was arranged.

The wives and sweethearts of the dancers began to prepare their “ doncin’ clooas,” competing keenly as to who should be the finest dressed. Spangles, ribbons, beads, and lace, were lavishly sewn on to the garments. The dancers wore “ fine linen shirts and velvet breeches.” Garlands of flowers were made with which to adorn the horses, and the Rush Cart had a special cover. On one occasion tradition says that such a cover cost over “ thirty pounds,” owing to the elaborate design in spangles.

The science of building a Rush Cart was an art known to but very few, and was chiefly carried out under the practised eye of some expert "thatcher." The principal portion of the rushes used were gathered in the marshy lands of Staley and the neighbourhood of the "Brushes," but a special kind, which were called "binding rushes," could not be obtained nearer than "Fidler's Green," a place some miles beyond Woodhead.

Young men of those days thought little of setting off on the Saturday afternoon and walking to the place where the rushes grew, staying on the spot all night, and when daylight came gathering as many as they could bundle together and carry away. With their loads upon their backs they would return to Stalybridge, arriving home on the Sunday night. The building of the Rush Cart was watched by those interested with keen delight, the climax being reached when the decorated cover was fastened on the front of the structure. Attached to the cover were numerous articles of value, lent by the supporters of the festival, viz., silver watches, tea spoons, ladles, brooches, and even tea-pots and copper kettles. Whenever the Stalybridge Rush Cart and its dancers met those of Ashton or Dukinfield, it was the signal for trouble and strife, and many serious conflicts occurred, when "Rush Cart Lads were bonny oh!" It was the custom on the demolition of the Rush Cart to place the rushes in the aisles and pews of the churches for the worshippers to walk on.

## BULL-BAITING.

A favourite attraction during the period of the Annual Wakes, was the exciting, but somewhat degrading sport, known as Bull-baiting.

The custom was to obtain a bull noted for its ferocity, which was tethered by means of a long rope to a tree stump or other suitable post, and while thus fastened, dogs specially bred and trained for the purpose were set upon the animal.

One man acted as master of the ceremonies, and his duty was to see that only one dog was slipped at a time. The men who had entered their dogs were ranged in a line, against a wall or fence, and when all was ready, their positions having been chosen by lot, the first man would slip his dog at the bull, and if the dog succeeded in pinning the animal by the nose, and holding on, it was supposed to have won. In the great majority of cases the dog was caught on the horns of the bull and tossed up into the air, sometimes higher than the neighbouring houses, and was either killed outright or maimed in such a manner as to be of no further use. Occasionally the rope by which the bull was fastened would break, and the people would rush from the place in all directions, limbs being broken in the scrimmage.

It was the practice to "bait the bull" for three days in succession, when the animal was eventually slaughtered, and the carcase sold at a very low price to the poorer classes. A common saying in the town

was : " It's as tough as bull beef." Prizes were offered by the local publicans to the competing dogs, the trophy being usually a brass or leathern collar. Bulls were baited on the " Hague," on the site of Grosvenor Square, the " Bowling Green," and on a plot of land near the present Victor Mill.

### PEACE-EGGING.

The custom of young folks, chiefly lads and youths, going from house to house during Easter-tide dressed in fantastic garments and performing a rhyming play, was a feature of this district. It is still remembered vividly by the elders of the town, who in their days doubtless took part in the antics of St. George, Bold Slasher, Lord Nelson, and the indispensable " Little Devil Doubt," with his besom and his final threat,

" If you don't give me money I'll sweep  
you all out."

A veteran, lately passed away, during a visit paid by the writer, referred to his experiences as follows :—

" We were always sure of getting something at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Platt, not from Mr. Platt, but from his lady. Sometimes there would be twelve or fourteen of us, and a rough lot we were. Ranged against the wall of the yard near the house, we went through our play-acting, and on its conclusion we each got a gill pot full of milk and a new-laid egg, together with a threepenny bit. Ah ! Masters were masters in those days."

## BON-FIRES AND FIREWORKS.

The celebration of the "Fifth of November" has ever been a favourite custom with the younger portion of the inhabitants, and many serious accidents resulted from the use of firearms and gunpowder.

Almost every household had amongst its chattels a gun of some description, which was used in these celebrations, and the inflammable nature of the material used in the local industries made it necessary for the authorities to take precautionary measures against fire, and warnings were annually issued by placard and through the medium of the "Bellman," against the use of "Fireworks, Gunpowder, and Firearms." The bon-fires were sometimes of large proportions, for coal could be bought at the pit mouth at from 3½d. to 4d. per cwt., and the anniversary fires sometimes burned and smouldered for several days.

Small cannons were used by the lads, whilst the elders would occasionally procure a discarded ship's gun, the supervision of the firing of which was entrusted to some veteran pensioner, and the detonations of the explosions would echo and re-echo, startling the inhabitants from one end of "Rassbottom" to the other.

## CRYING THE HOUR OF THE NIGHT.

The custom of the Watchman shouting out the time of the night, thus: "Past ten o'clock; keep your

windows and doors locked," is of very ancient origin, and was revived during the rule of the "Police Commissioners."

There was a proposition before that body dealing with the provision of a "Public Clock," which was to have "two dials and to be lighted up with gas." The economic authorities appear to have "shelved" the question, and as a substitute, doubtless, passed the following resolution:—"September 10th, 1841. That the watchmen call the hour of the night from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. until some other arrangement relating thereto shall be made."

On the 4th March, 1842, the following resolution was passed:—"That the crying of the hour by the Watchmen be discontinued." Four years later the matter of a "Public Clock" was again discussed, April 2nd, 1846:—"That the Clerk do advertise for estimates for the erection of a turret for the intended Clock." "The Turret" was erected, and still adorns the roof of the Town Hall, without a clock. The following may be the explanation of a further change of policy. August 30th, 1848:—"That in future the Watchman be instructed to call the hour of 10 at night and 5 in the morning."

### WELL-DRESSING.

The supply of water for domestic purposes was obtained in various ways; that required for cooking was carried from the wells, springs and pumps, of which



there are few traces left whilst for ordinary purposes the well-remembered rain-tubs, with their wood spigots, furnished a supply. The condensed water from the mills and the river, to which latter there were many public roads, was also available; then, again, there were people who carried water at so much per burn-can. A noted well was situated near the Bowling Green, and was known as "Mellor's Drop"; two splendid wells existed near Mount Pleasant, whilst "Cook's Well" near Ridge Hill Lane and the one existing at "Rhodes," half way up Ridge Hill, are still shown on the Ordnance Survey maps. Some years ago, whilst necessary repairs were in progress near King Street a large and neatly shaped well shaft of considerable depth was discovered, doubtless the supply at some period of one of the neighbouring inns for brewing purposes; having fallen into disuse it had been covered over and forgotten. The famous "Yorkshire Row Pump" has been made the subject of a song, one verse of which runs as follows:—

"The Brushes with its rising ground  
With reservoirs will soon abound;  
Its brooks and streams are good, I know,  
But nowt like th' pump in Yorkshire Row."

From 1860 to 1870 there were several dry summers, and people felt the scarcity of water. In many houses, taps were unknown; the result was that the wells were appreciated, and one which had never failed in its supply was selected by the grateful neighbours for the cele-

bration of the ancient and time-honoured custom of "well-dressing."

The time selected was Stalybridge Wakes, 1869, which commenced on July 17th, and the occasion was one to be remembered. Messrs. Leech, of Grosvenor Street Mills, furnished the necessary material and labour required in the erection of a framework, etc., above the well, which was situated near "Leech's tunnel." Beautiful garlands of flowers and festoons of foliage were fixed and looped as decorations, streamers of hunting and gaily coloured flags adding to the effect, whilst prominent above all were the mottoes "Success to the spring, may it never cease to flow," and "Success to the well."

The residents of the streets and approaches entered into friendly rivalry in their efforts at decorating their own houses. The Shepherd's Band was in evidence and supplied choice selections, whilst crowds of townspeople and visitors who ascended the slope were invited to "drink from the well." No charge was made, a box being provided for voluntary offerings, which were handed over to the representatives of the District Infirmary. Such, then, was the last of the Stalybridge Well-Dressings, and although almost forgotten it was most interesting to hear the older residents talk about it, when they saw the photograph which was on view in the recent Jubilee Exhibition.

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## Chapter 4.

Quaint Gleanings from the Past--The Staley Wood Club, 1792--The First Machine-Shop--The Blanketeers--Millbrook--The Post-Offices of the Past--Body Snatching.

“Pursuit of knowledge under difficulties.”

*Lord Brougham.*

### THE STALEY WOOD CLUB, 1792.

**T**HERE existed in the year 1792 a society for mutual instruction in Staley Wood, a fact which is verified by reference to the list of subscribers in Aiken's History of Manchester. On the second page of the said list will be found the name of “John Bower for Staley Wood Club.” Another proof is the following extract from the memoirs of a local worthy:—

“At the age of 18 (1796) I was a member of a book club consisting of 26 members, which was continued for many years. . . . We established a conversation club and drew up a number of rules for our guidance, one of which prohibited the discussion of any political or religious subject. We had members from Ashton, Dukinfield, Newton, and Mossley; sometimes we held our meeting at Ashton, to accommodate our friends from Oldham, Royton, and other places, and I can truly say I gathered more sound intellectual knowledge in connection with that club than at any period of my life.”

The writer has in his possession a book which belonged to a similar society at Mossley, founded in 1792. The volume has the society's label affixed within its covers.

## THE FIRST MACHINE SHOP.

About the year 1800-01 there existed a firm of machinists, whose name was "Hartley and Woodcock." Their workshop was located in the attic of a three storeyed building, which stood on the site now covered by the "Fire Station." The place is well remembered, and was known as "Old Jenny Booth's Garret." The entrance was by way of a large entry in "Hall's Court," across a yard, and up an external flight of stone steps to the second floor, whence another set of steps or stairs led to the workshop.

Whilst "Hartley and Woodcock" were in business here, they made jennies of the "enormous size of 20 dozens," and it is recorded that from these machines a spinner could earn from thirty shillings to two pounds per week, by working from four or five o'clock in the morning until eight and nine o'clock at night.

"Hartley and Woodcock" became bankrupt after a few years, owing to troublous times.

## THE "BLANKETEERS."

There was about the year 1817 a certain class of operatives who organised themselves into a society, and met in the "dead of the night" to discuss "reform." Their place of assembly was a cellar near the "Bowling Green." These men were known as "Jacobins," but in later years were called "Blanketeers."

One of the leading spirits was a blacksmith named John Cocker, who was a man of more than ordinary

intelligence, being gifted as a speaker and reader. The names of the members of this society have been preserved, and the list includes the following :—James Swindells, John Tinker, William Platt, Josiah Knott, Samuel Nield, John Nield, James Nield, Thomas Hague, John Norton, Joseph Norton, James Lees, Jonathan Cowgill, and others. Newspapers were expensive luxuries in those days, and it was the custom for one of the number, whenever they met, to read aloud to the party.

Political feeling ran very high, and on the inauguration of the “ Blanketeer Movement ” many Stalybridge men joined the scheme. The project was that a large body of Lancashire operatives should march to London, and lay the grievances of the people before the Government. Each man must provide himself with a blanket, which was folded up and carried on the shoulders like a knapsack. On the 10th March, 1817, the Stalybridge detachment left the village and marched to Stockport, where it was arranged that they should meet the Manchester and Oldham sections. Arrived at the appointed place, they found a large number of Dragoons and other soldiers waiting for them, who soon dispersed the “ Blanketeers.” Some of the more daring spirits evaded the soldiers, and eventually reached London.

Jonathan Cowgill, of Stalybridge, was one, and having sought and obtained an interview with Lord Sidmouth, he and his companions explained their mission. His Lordship listened patiently, and kindly advised them to return to their country homes, supple-

menting his remarks with a present of ten shillings to each man.

Jonathan Cowgill returned to Stalybridge somewhat sun-burned and weather-stained, and was for a time famous on account of his adventure. Cowgill in after years became book-keeper and cashier at one of the local mills.

### THE POST OFFICES OF THE PAST.

The earliest post master we can find mention of is Mr. James Buckley, who held that office in Stalybridge in 1818. Further information states that "Letters arrive at Twelve at Noon, are sent off at Five in the Evening, by a foot-post, to meet the mails at Manchester."

In the year 1825 we find that the post mistress was Mrs. Mary Ann Mather, Post Office, Bowling Green. "Letters arrive from Manchester every morning at 8, and are despatched at 3 afternoon."

The identical house was one of three which stood opposite to the King Street Chapel, and was used as a shop prior to its demolition a few years ago. In the wall of the building which came next to Bell's Court, there was a portion of the brickwork which was newer than the rest, where the post office window had been built up.

In 1848. "The Post Office, Rassbottom Street. Post-master, Dekin Cheetham. Letters arrive from all parts (from Manchester) every morning at half-past

seven, and every afternoon at half-past five, and are despatched thereto every evening at half-past six and nine."

### MILLBROOK.

Millbrook, or Staley Mill, was up to the year 1793 little more than a hamlet or fold, there being nothing but a narrow lane or pack horse road to Stalybridge. The old road is shown in the ancient maps, winding through the dale from the Roman road at Swineshaw, towards the Scout, a branch also going by way of Besom Lane towards Hyde Green. The construction of the turnpike road from Stalybridge to Saddleworth opened up a good connection, and the growth of Millbrook dates from that time. In 1803 it is recorded that Millbrook itself contained only eight houses, including the old Tollbar House, and four years later (1807), we learn that there existed a cotton mill known as Staley Mill. According to the description referred to, the mill was "a building seven windows long, including the staircase, and four storeys high;" the largest spinning mules it could contain would be  $23\frac{1}{2}$  dozens.

The bottom room was used for carding and slubbing, and was sub-let to Mr. Abel Hyde, of Moorgate. The place was turned by a water wheel fed from the Swineshaw Brook. The owner of the mill was Mr. Hugh Kershaw. In the year 1814 the place passed into the hands of Mr. Saville Smith, who enlarged the building by adding two windows at the end nearest the brook. A small steam engine was now put down at the back

of the mill. Woollen manufacture was now discontinued in the lower room, and cotton carding introduced in its place. Financial troubles overtook Mr. Smith about the year 1821-2, and the mill was stopped for a long time, until Messrs. Harrison, of Stalybridge, bought the concern and restarted it. In 1837 a disastrous fire broke out, which almost levelled the place to the ground. Fortunately for the operatives no time was lost in its re-erection, for there is a record of "the rearing supper," which took place on the 26th November, 1837. As soon as the place was roofed in, machinery and shafting were delivered, and in March, 1838, a pair of mules were started, whilst on the Wakes Tuesday (23rd July) a grand dinner party was given by Messrs. Harrison to their workpeople.

The employees of the firm at Millbrook and Stalybridge met, and formed a procession at Rassbottom Mills, and marched, headed by the Stalybridge Old Band, to Millbrook. The number of persons may be judged when we quote that "the procession reached from the mill door at Millbrook to Spindle Point, Copley, near the Reindeer Inn."

On the 5th August, 1855, a great flood occurred. The water from the brook found its way into the weaving shed and carried some of the looms away, whilst two days later there was a repetition, the depth of water being 4 feet 10½ inches, causing great damage to machinery and material.



## BODY SNATCHING.

The practice of robbing the silent grave of its inmate was once very common in the neighbourhood of Stalybridge, and memorials of the custom in the shape of "Resurrection stones" may be seen in the burial ground, Cocker Hill, it being usual, after the interment of a coffin, to lower a large block of stone on to the casket before re-filling the cavity with earth.

The late Mr. William Chadwick, in his book of Reminiscences, deals with the subject at length, and mentions particularly the case of the Stalybridge youth, Lewis Brierley, whose body was taken from the tomb in Mottram Churchyard, and where the following inscription may still be seen:—

"In memory of Lewis Brierley, son of James and Mary Brierley, of Valley Mill, who died Oct. 3rd, 1827, in the 15th year of his age.

"Mary, wife of the above-mentioned James Brierley, who died April 9th, 1828, in the 43rd year of her age."

"Though once beneath the ground his corpse was laid,  
For use of surgeons it was thence conveyed,  
Vain was the scheme to hide the impious theft,  
The body taken, shroud and coffin left;  
Ye wretches who pursue this barbarous trade,  
Your carcasses in turn may be conveyed  
Like his, to some unfeeling surgeon's room,  
Nor can they justly meet a better doom."

James Brierley was a woollen manufacturer, and at one period worked the "Old Greasy Mill," Old Street. His son Lewis, a very fine youth for his years, was

accidentally killed by the kick of a horse belonging to his father. A friend of the family, Mr. Hollinworth, of Newton Moor, heard of the accident and visited Brierley, at the same time offering a place for the deceased in his family vault within the precincts of Mottram Church. The funeral party arrived at their destination, but considerable delay occurred before the sexton could be found. Darkness was closing in, and instead of being buried, as intended, inside the church, the coffin was interred in a grave which had been prepared for somebody else, and which grave was near the outer wall of the church yard. The final part of the interment had to be performed by candle light. The mother of the deceased was ill and did not attend the funeral, and she was much troubled when she learned how matters had been carried out. A strange idea took possession of her, and in order to satisfy his wife, Brierley went time and again to his son's grave to ascertain if anything had been disturbed. James Brierley was a member of the Masonic fraternity, and during one of his visits to the churchyard he met a brother craftsman, who inquired the reason for his frequent visits. Brierley's answer was that his wife suspected that "Lewis had been taken." "Yes," said his friend, "and your wife is right; the lad has been taken." Nothing more was said at the time.

As will be seen by the epitaph quoted, the mother died about six months after the son, and Brierley had a new grave made. By a singular coincidence the grave in which his son had been interred was re-opened

on the day of the funeral, upon seeing which, Brierley and one of his friends immediately descended and lifted out the coffin of "Lewis," which was found to contain only the shroud. Brierley was a man not to be trifled with. He exhibited the empty coffin of his son on the "Crown Pole Steps," and called upon his "Brethren" to help him to trace the desecrators of the tomb. He even came down to Stalybridge for strong ropes, with which he fastened the coffin to the pole. The miscreants remained undiscovered. The coffin was brought to Stalybridge, and the father had it re-mounted and polished, keeping it for his own use. The writer has verified these facts by inquiries from the family, one of whom remembers the empty coffin, and was present when Brierley himself was placed in it. James Brierley died at his residence in Old Street, Stalybridge, on the 20th September, 1853, and was interred in the burial ground of the Ebenezer Baptist Chapel, Cross Leech Street, where a double vault, covered with huge flat stones, may be seen from the street.

Brierley always suspected that the sexton at Mottram was connected with the disappearance of his son's body, and never allowed any opportunity to pass without telling him so. To such an extent did this custom grow that the sexton dared not come to Stalybridge. The sequel is but traditional:—"One night as James Brierley was seated by his fireside, a visitor came to the door with a message that 'Mr. Brierley was wanted on Cocker Hill.'

“On arrival at the place Brierley found a man lying on his death-bed, one who had been considered a friend of the family, and who even attended the funeral of ‘Lewis.’ In the presence of his wife the expiring man confessed that he was the one who had taken the body, and that the suspected sexton was entirely innocent. It is said that James Brierley went to Mottram early next morning and expressed his sorrow to the man he had long suspected, at the same time begging his forgiveness.”

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## Chapter 5.

The Mill Schools—The Dames’ Schools—Private Schools and Academies—Night Schools—The Educational Institute.

“When I was a lad, if we wanted to climb, we had first to make our own ladders.”

*Ben Brierley.*

### THE MILL SCHOOLS.

THE “Factory School” was often located in the “Warehouse,” or near the “Lodge.” At one mill the schoolmaster acted as “Lodge-keeper and Roller-coverer, in addition to his duties as teacher. It is said that this worthy had a piece of brass gas-piping, which he used as a “cane” in the cases of obstinate or unruly pupils, but whether he did or not some of the lads who passed through his hands became in after years successful manufacturers and business men. One noted schoolmaster of this type had been a soldier,

who had followed the fortunes of war under the Iron Duke, and many of our old townspeople can give vivid word-portraits of him, especially of the periods known as "pension days." The children in many cases taught each other the little they had learned at home. These Mill Schools opened at six o'clock in the morning, and at half-past ten in the forenoon the scholars were dismissed and sent into the mill, another set, who had been at work, taking their places.

The hour for leaving work at night was supposed to be seven o'clock, but it was seldom the hands got away at that time. The subsequent formation of the "British Schools" in Stalybridge and Dukinfield abolished this system, the mill children being sent to the new institutions, which were known as "Half-time Schools."

Night schools were formed in various parts of the town, where intelligent operatives acted as teachers to their fellow workers. A school of this description was founded in Ridge Hill Lane, about 1860, which developed into the present "Working Men's Institute."

#### THE SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES.

The question of education was well considered by the better classes, who sent their sons to be trained at various places. The Moravian College at Fairfield was the nearest high-class school. Many of our local cotton masters were educated there. In 1818, there appears to have been only one recognised school in Stalybridge, situated on Cocker Hill, the schoolmaster being Nathan Andrew.

Seven years later, 1825, the number had increased to five, Cocker Hill School, John Brookes, master ; Chapel Street School, William Watson, master ; and three others which cannot be located, under the control of Solomon Cartwright, Thomas Hyde, and John Hussey. The children who worked in the mills got very little schooling, except that which they obtained at the Sunday Schools, where they were taught to read and write in copy books. The action of the authorities in connection with the "factory children" made it compulsory that the employers should give each child employed a certain number of hours per day in school. The old-fashioned "Dames' Schools" existed, of which there is this record :—

Mary Whitehead,	Schoolmistress,	Stamford Street.
Jessie Sutcliffe,	„	Mount Pleasant.
James and Mary Holmes,		Canal Street.
Mary and Jane Davies,		Bennett Street.
Lister Ives,		Grosvenor Street.
James Shaw,		Set Street.
Henry Schofield,		Beaumont Square.

The rapid growth of Stalybridge and the inauguration of the various Churches and Chapels offered many opportunities for the establishment of day schools. In 1848 there existed the following :—

British School,	Kay St.,	Schoolmaster,	George Thomas.
Catholic School,	Spring Bank St.,	Mistress,	Maria Lees.
National School,	Hey Heads,	Schoolmaster,	William G. Barlow

National School, Copley,	„	Alexander Smith.
National School, Millbrook,	„	Thomas Howard.
People's School, Brierley St.,	„	John Avison.
Mount Pleasant Academy,	„	Robert Smith.
Chapel Street School,	„	Thomas Smith.

About 1851-2 there was formed a society in "Castle Hall," known as the "Educational Institute," from which originated the "People's Educational Institute," or "People's Hall," now known as the "Grand Theatre." This building was erected in the "Early Sixties" of the last century. A document dated 7th May, 1861, drawn up by Mr. Noah Buckley, as Solicitor to the Company, contains the names of the Board of Directors as under:—William Hill, James Ramsbottom, George Frederick Tyne, John Street, Edmund Betts, William Hilton, Thomas Hodson, Jabez Pagden, John Cartey and William Belfield, the last named being a member of the present directorate of the company; whilst its legal matters are still in the hands of the firm of solicitors which bears Mr. Buckley's name. Its first annual meeting was held on the 25th October, 1864, when the officials consisted of the following persons as directors:—Isaac Newton (President); William Hill (Secretary); James Willerton, James Ramsbottom, George Haigh Green, Richard Brereton, George Frederick Tyne, William Evans (No. 1), William Evans (No. 2), John Street, and William Hilton. The cost of the People's Institute was about £1,200, and that of the shops in Melbourne Street, also owned by the Institute, £653.

## Chapter 6.

The First Fire Engine and Fire Brigade—The Turnover from the Subscribers to the Commissioners—The Old Brigade—A Fire at Ashton—The Water Supply—List of Chief Officers.

“ Hope for the best, and prepare for the worst,—it’s a grand maxim.”  
*Old Scotch Proverb.*

### THE FIRST FIRE ENGINE AND FIRE BRIGADE.

**T**HE danger of fire has always been very great in connection with the cotton industry. No sooner had the pioneers begun to build their four and five storeyed mills than the fact asserted itself. The spinners, weavers, and others had to work during the dark hours of the mornings and evenings of the winter months by the aid of candle light and oil lamps. There is a record of the destruction of “ The Bastile ” by fire in 1804, when a man named Joseph Booth was killed. The historical “ Soot-poke Mill ” met a similar fate in May, 1824, whilst a cotton mill belonging to Thomas Lees, in Queen Street, took fire on the 29th May, 1823, and was burned to the ground in twenty minutes, an eye witness stating “ that crowds of people stood on the Bowling Green to view the flames.”

It may be inferred that the troublous times of 1811-12, when mill-burning by rioters and malcontents was common, would be the era of the establishment of a fire brigade. The mill owners were alive to their great risks, and covered themselves by insurance, whilst the “ Phoenix Fire Office,” in the year 1818, granted a



sum of money "towards the repair of the Stalybridge Engine then in use." Three years later, 1821, the engine aforesaid being considered unsatisfactory, a subscription list was opened, by which means a new engine was purchased from a London firm named Hopwood and Tilley. Cotton mills were multiplying in the town, and on the 19th of June, 1823, the old records tell of the addition to the appliances of the Stalybridge Fire Brigade of another engine constructed and supplied by the firm before named.

A distinction by name was now thought necessary; hence, one engine was christened the "Presentation," and the other the "Subscription." It is recorded that these fire engines were fitted with "horse shafts," and also with rope harness for men, doubtless like the quaint gearing used for the drawing of the Rush Carts at that period.

On page 156 of "Butterworth's History of Stalybridge, 1840," we find the following paragraph: "That very necessary and beneficial establishment, the Fire Engine House, was erected in 1824 by subscription," and in the records of the Stalybridge Police Commissioners, under the date of 30th July, 1828, there is the entry that: "An offer having been made by the trustees and subscribers of the Fire Engines, Engine House, and Lock-up, to be given to the Stalybridge Police Commissioners, resolved that this offer be accepted, and that the Commissioners undertake to pay all debts now owing on the above property."

Mr. John Cheetham, of Rassbottom Street, Postmaster, Draper, and Smallware Dealer, was the first officially appointed "Conductor of fire engines," and the body of men who formed the Fire Brigade then established comprised the following:—

Thomas Blakeley.	James Rowcliffe.	Hugh Ashton.
John Barker.	James Sutcliffe.	John Chadwick.
William Roberts.	William Bentley.	James Burton.
John Buckley.	John Williamson.	James Schofield.

Many quaint old echoes come down to us from the days of the "Old Brigade." On one occasion the men were busy re-painting the apparatus with "startling vermilion," and had the engines in pieces, and whilst one man was painting the ladders two others were daubing the wheels, and a third party engaged on the body of the engine. Suddenly the bell in the turret on the engine house rang out its summons, "A fire at Ashton." The engines were put together, ladders, wheels, wet paint and all, and away they went. When the fire was extinguished and the engines had returned, it was discovered that one of the wheel-axles had "never had the lynch-pin put in."

Another interesting item gleaned from the old records runs as follows:—

November 2nd, 1832. "That Jacob Waterhouse, who supplied a horse for the fire engine at the fire of Messrs. Ashton, Newton, and who had his leg broken, have £1 given to him for the use of his horse."

The supply of water in case of emergency was obtained from the river, as will be seen by the following resolution of 3rd June, 1829 :—

“ That better approaches to the river be provided for the supply of water in case of fire, and for other purposes.”

Within the memory of many these approaches to the river existed, to the number of six or seven in Market Street alone.

About 30 years ago, 1877, the “ Old Lock-ups,” which had been the headquarters of the fire brigade from its origination, were discarded, the appliances being removed into the “ Old Market,” or the basement of the Town Hall, and there remained housed until placed in the present Fire Station, which is erected on the best site that for the purpose exists in the town, the fact being due to some extent to the influence of one at least on the responsible committee, who knows every inch of the town, and who from his youth was always to the fore at the first clang of the “ Old Fire Bell.”

Since the year 1828 the list of the officers in charge of the fire brigade is as follows :—

John Cheetham ..	1828	James Hellowell ..	1831
Edward Garside,	1831-32	John Gatley ..	1832
Thomas Blakeley..	1836	John Heap ..	1846
David Illingworth..	1852	Thomas Phillips ..	1860
William Chadwick..	1863	John Bates.. ..	1899

The foresight of our local authorities of late years, shown in the provision of well-designed headquarters and thoroughly up-to-date appliances, has been productive of a feeling of security, and a knowledge that in the hour of need and danger efficient help will be forthcoming.





## PART VII.

### LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AND MOVEMENTS.

#### Chapter 1.

The Mechanics' Institution—Its First Home—Migration and Growth—Projected Institution—Preliminary Meetings and Result—The Realisation.

“Permanent and valuable auxiliaries to popular instruction.”

*Bulwer Lytton.*

#### THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTION.

**T**HE origination of Mechanics' Institutions is said to be the work of Dr. Birkbeck, and it is gratifying to know the village of Stalybridge was one of the first places in the Kingdom to adopt the idea. On the 7th September, 1825, there was established a society which in later years, became known as the Stalybridge Mechanics' Institution. The name which it bore at its commencement was “A Society for Mutual Instruction,” under which modest designation the germ of a literary and philosophical institution was discoverable. A considerable stock of scientific apparatus was rapidly obtained, and classes for instruction in arithmetic, mathe-

matics, music, geology were formed. The first home of the Society was in the attics, or top storey of some cottages nearly opposite the White House Hotel, in Shepley Street. In this place lectures and essays were given, whilst a "reading room" was established in another building in Queen Street or King Street. According to Edwin Butterworth's publication of 1841: "The number of members in 1840 was 64, or only one in every 300 of the population." The Institution, after a period of some years, migrated across the town to a room in Bennett Street, from whence, through the efforts of Robert Platt, Esq., another move was made to a house in Grosvenor Street, now used as the Relieving Offices. Here the Society remained for a long time, and doubtless beneath that roof the desire for more commodious premises had its inception; the idea was fostered, and the result was as follows:—

On Tuesday evening, December 20th, 1860, a meeting was held to promote the scheme, in the Court Room of the Stalybridge Town Hall.

There was not a large assembly. The number present included Alderman Robert Hopwood, Councillor Ralph Bates, Mr. John Ridgway, Mr. John Marsland, Mr. Ralph Ashton, Mr. William Storrs, Mr. Samuel Nield, Mr. Bamford, Mr. Walter Kenyon, Mr. Thomas Kirkman, Mr. James Kirk, Mr. John Quarmby, Mr. William Wood, etc., etc.

Mr. Bamford was voted to the chair, and Mr. Walter Kenyon moved the following resolution:—"That the

important town of Stalybridge, with its numerous population, and increasing prosperity, ought to possess a more eligible and commodious building for the purpose of a Mechanics' Institution."

Speeches followed by Councillor Ralph Bates, Mr. John Ridgway, Mr. William Storrs, Mr. James Kirk, Mr. John Quarmby and Mr. W. Wood. Resolutions were proposed and adopted, and at the close of the meeting the Chairman announced that Robert Platt, Esq., had promised £200, Councillor Ralph Bates £50, and Mr. James Kirk, on behalf of the firm he was connected with, £100. The news was welcomed with great acclamation.

On the 25th January, 1861, a deputation consisting of Councillor Ralph Bates, Mr. James Kirk and Mr. Ralph Ashton, waited upon F. D. P. Astley, Esq., Dukinfield Lodge, explained the scheme, and sought his aid. Mr. Astley immediately promised a piece of land in High Street, and supplemented it with a donation of £100.

On the 12th March, 1861, a meeting was held in the Town Hall under the chairmanship of Mr. Ralph Ashton. Mr. James Kirk announced that subscriptions had already been received and promised amounting to £1,734. Councillor Ralph Bates, in a rousing speech, proposed the following:—"That this meeting is of opinion that the subscriptions already promised justify us in taking immediate steps towards the erection of a new building, one calculated to meet the wants of this thriving and populous borough."

A further resolution was as follows:—"That the following gentlemen form the Building Committee:—Robert Platt, Esq., T. Harrison, Esq., John Leech, Esq., Councillor Ralph Bates, Alderman Hopwood, Mr. J. Kirk, Mr. J. Marsland, Mr. G. Taylor, Mr. G. Gimson, Mr. W. T. Churchill, Mr. J. Taylor, Mr. R. Ashton, Mr. J. Ridgway, Mr. J. Bamford, Mr. W. Burnley, Mr. W. Bass, and Mr. H. Johnson."

On the 13th April, 1861, it was announced that the Building Committee had accepted the design of Messrs. Blackwell and Sons, of Manchester, for the proposed Institution.

The estimate for the erection of the building was accepted on the 4th June, 1861, the cost to be £2,950, the contractors being Messrs. Greenup and Company, Manchester.

The foundation stone was laid on the 17th August, 1861, by David Harrison, Esq., amid public rejoicings. During his speech Mr. Harrison said: "I have lived in this town for sixty-three or sixty-four years, and I remember when the spot where I now stand was nothing but green fields."

The building was completed and opened in July, 1862.

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## Chapter 2.

The Volunteer Movement—The Astley Rifle Corps—The First Muster-Roll—Past Officers—The Roll of Honour—Retired Commanding Officers

“Defence not Defiance.”

### THE ASTLEY RIFLE CORPS.

**T**HE Volunteer Movement in Stalybridge had its birth during the period when England was shadowed by the threatening war cloud of 1859-60. The offer of the Government was “That if Volunteers would equip themselves with uniform and arms, and supply themselves with military instructors, at their own expense, the State would avail itself of their services.”

To the astonishment of the whole world, and the surprise of England herself, though the cost was said to mean about £8 per man, 100,000 men enrolled themselves as volunteers almost immediately, under the motto of “Defence, not Defiance.”

It must in all fairness be said that the local movement owed its inception to a number of Dukinfield gentlemen, at the head of whom was Francis Dukinfield Palmer Astley, Esq. Preliminary meetings were held, and finally a public meeting, at which a large number of Stalybridge gentlemen unexpectedly presented themselves. Advertisements, placards and hand-bills were issued for the purpose of furthering the movement,

which soon assumed practical shape. Young men were invited to join, and those so willing were referred for further information to :—

Captain Astley, Deputy Lieut., Dukinfield Lodge.

Lieut. C. J. Ashton, J.P., Newton House, Newton.

Ensign Thomas Bazley Hall, Stalybridge.

Mr. Ralph Bates, J.P., Stalybridge.

Mr. Charles Woolnough, M.A., Dukinfield.

Mr. George E. Hyde, Dukinfield.

Mr. Joseph Adamson, Newton Moor.

Mr. Alfred Aspland, Hon. Sec., Dukinfield.

The young men of the district flocked to the cause and gave in their names, and though the majority have answered "The Last Roll Call," there are still a few of "The Old Brigade" left.

#### THE FIRST MUSTER ROLL OF THE ASTLEY RIFLE CORPS.

January 3rd, 1860, Mr. Astley was sworn in at the office of Mr. Hall, Ashton-under-Lyne. The following persons were sworn in by Captain De Hollyngworth, at the Temperance Hall, Dukinfield, January 6th, 1860 :—

	AGE.		AGE.
Charles James Ashton.	29	Charles Andrew	.. 34
Thomas Bazley Hall..	26	James Walsh	.. 27
Alfred Aspland	.. 44	William Tetlow	.. 30
Charles Woolnough..	24	William Selby	.. 40
Gracchus Hall	.. 22	Thomas Boothroyd	.. 30

*Astley Rifle Corps, First Muster Roll—Continued.*

	AGE.		AGE.
Basil Hall ..	21	Thomas Cheetham ..	23
William Hyde ..	21	James Munday ..	22
Sydney Hyde ..	19	David Illingworth ..	26
Herbert Hyde ..	20	Thomas Hodgkinson ..	22
Ralph Bates ..	29	T. C. W. Gatley ..	25
Henry Hyde ..	22	James Woolley ..	25
Robert Aspland ..	18	Joseph Tillon ..	45
Lees Aspland ..	17	David Taylor ..	25
John Buckley Brierley	22	John Bridgehouse ..	21
Percy Brierley ..	19	Walter Cottrell ..	21
Samuel Hill ..	21	William Ashworth ..	23
Lewis Lees ..	44	Joe Beaumont ..	19
Thomas Borsev ..	18	Isaac Wheeldon ..	43
Joseph Travis ..	24	Alfred Johnson ..	28
G. E. Hyde ..	24	Francis Ditchfield ..	38
Allen Kenworthy ..	28	T. G. Cunningham ..	18
William Hibbert ..	21	John Reece ..	18
Edward Smith ..	19	Edward T. Atkinson .	19
John Witehead ..	31	Joseph Adamson ..	18
John Perrin ..	18	Elias Oldfield ..	32
James Bradbury ..	21	Samuel Stansfield ..	21
Robert White ..	30	George Thompson ..	24
Benjamin Lowe ..	21	William Andrews ..	40
John Derbyshire ..	40	Joseph Corbet ..	34
Robert Hollingworth	32	James Bentley ..	28
John Shaw ..	23	Lewis Warhurst ..	22
John Wagstaffe ..	19	James Clayton ..	21
Alfred Fenwick ..	24	Samuel Perrin ..	20

*Astley Rifle Corps, First Muster Roll—Continued.*

	AGE.		AGE.
Alexander Robinson..	22	Nathaniel Howard ..	25
Henry Band ..	24	John Longley ..	19
Crossland Cooke ..	19	Thomas Shaw ..	19
William Cooke ..	20	William Singleton ..	19
Edward Chadwick ..	30	John Goddard ..	19
Albert Lowe ..	19	Wright — ..	17
Joseph Higginbottom.	18	James Barlow ..	19
Josiah Byrom ..	20	John — ..	18
William Byrom ..	16	John H. Schofield ..	18
Henry Bridgehouse..	17	James Cooke ..	22
John Goddard ..	19	Henry Bottomley ..	17
Alfred Hollingworth .	18	George Gimson ..	
Frank Byrom ..		John Heap ..	
John Marlor ..			

## HON. MEMBERS.

J. Hyde ..	..	George Byrom ..
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The self sacrifice and enthusiasm of the local pioneers of the Volunteer Movement undoubtedly laid the foundation from whence arose the patriotic spirit which bore fruit in the hour of need. In the dark days of 1899, when England had to face the inevitable struggle in South Africa, and friends were none too many, from no town in the Kingdom when the supreme moment arrived was the response more firm than from Stalybridge. A fitting tribute adorns the wall of the large Drill Hall, at Stalybridge, inscribed as follows:—

A ROLL OF HONOUR.  
TO THEIR LASTING CREDIT  
THE FOLLOWING  
STALYBRIDGE AND DUKINFIELD VOLUNTEERS  
SERVED IN SOUTH AFRICA  
WITH THE 2ND BATTALION OF THE CHESHIRE REGIMENT  
IN THE BOER WAR

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FROM 13TH JANUARY, 1900, TO 30TH APRIL, 1901.

Lieut. J. Bates.  
Cr. Sgt. J. McConnell.  
Sgt. W. Lees.  
Cpl. J. Giblin.  
Cpl. H. Hodgkinson.  
Pte. A. M. Alexander.    Pte. J. Hill.  
    ,, R. Bowers.           ,, G. Wadsworth.  
    ,, B. Grimshaw.

FROM 4TH FEBRUARY, 1901, TO 28TH MAY, 1902.

Cpl. T. Hilton.           Pte. L. Byrne.           Pte. J. O'Neil.  
Pte. T. Batty.           ,, J. Cox.               ,, B. O'Neil.  
    ,, J. Brown.           ,, T. Davenport. Bug. J. Cheetham.  
    ,, H. Buckley.       ,, H. Hilton.

FROM 17TH FEBRUARY, 1902, TO 2ND AUGUST, 1902.

Capt. J. Bates.           Pte. H. Hodgkinson.  
Sgt. J. T. W. Dayton.   ,, S. Holliday.  
    ,, G. Holt.           ,, J. Howard.  
L.-Sgt. W. Shires.       ,, J. Leech.

*Roll of Honour, 17th Feb. 1902, to Aug. 1902--Continued.*

Cpl. W. Whitehead.	„ A. Lowe.
L.-Cpl. E. Bradbury.	„ F. Lynham.
„ S. Roebuck.	„ A. Mather.
Pte. H. Addy.	„ J. Moorhouse.
„ G. Andrews.	„ C. Norton.
„ G. Austerberry.	„ F. O'Connor.
„ J. Barrett.	„ J. Pailthorpe.
„ R. Bowers.	„ C. Robinson.
„ J. Bray.	„ W. T. Royle.
„ D. Brayshaw.	„ W. Schofield.
„ R. Carr.	„ R. Schofield.
„ W. Carr.	„ T. Schofield.
„ H. Chadwick.	„ J. Shaw.
„ R. Crossland.	„ T. Sidebottom.
„ D. Davies.	„ W. Skitt.
„ H. Dooley.	„ W. Slack.
„ A. Eastwood.	„ F. Smith.
„ W. Garlick.	„ J. Stansfield.
„ J. H. Hall.	„ J. H. Swift.
„ A. Hardwick.	„ J. H. Swindells.
„ J. Harrop.	„ D. Taylor.
„ G. Harrop.	„ J. Tuson.
„ W. Hartley.	„ A. Whitehead.
„ W. Hilton.	„ J. Winterbottom.
„ J. Hobson.	

THE ABOVE TABLET IS THE GIFT OF RALPH  
 BATES, ESQ., J.P., FORMERLY  
 CAPTAIN IN THIS DETACHMENT.

The following past Officers of the Stalybridge Detachment of the 4th V.B. Cheshire Regiment have, at this date (1907), answered the "Last Roll Call":—

	Year of First Commission and Rank then held.	Year of resignation and Rank then held.
F. D. P. Astley,	Capt. 1860	Lieut. Col. 1868
G. E. Adshead,	Lieut. 1862	Lieut. 1863
C. J. Ashton,	Lieut. 1860	Lieut. Col. 1869
A. Aspland,	Hon. Surg. 1860	Hon. Surg. 1880
Ralph Bates,	Lieut. 1860	Captain, 1863
H. Bibby,	Sub.-Lieut. 1874	Captain, 1884
Canon R. H. Brown,	Actg. Chapl. 1884	Actg. Chapl. 1887
E. Chamberlayne,	Surg. Lieut. 1890	Surg. Lieut. 1891
I. Knott Clayton,	Ensign, 1868	Captain, 1873
George Gimson,	Ensign, 1863	Captain, 1873
James Greaves,	Ensign, 1871	Captain, 1878
T. B. Hall,	Ensign, 1860	Captain, 1862
Basil Hall,	Ensign, 1861	Captain, 1864
W. F. Hopwood,	Actg. Surg. 1884	Surg.-Lieut. 1892
R. Hopwood,	Hon. Surg. 1864	Surg. Major, v.D 1883
Allen Harrison,	Ensign, 1872	Lieut. 1878
G. E. Hyde,	Ensign, 1861	Lieut. 1863
Reuben Lees,	Ensign, 1869	Captain, 1877
George Taylor,	Ensign, 1862	Captain, 1874
C. Woolnough,	Captain 1860	Captain, 1862

RETIRED (SURVIVING) COMMANDING OFFICERS.

	Total Service
Major and Hon. Lieut. Col. A. Sidebottom, v.D.	1872-1894
Capt. and Hon. Major J. Schofield, v.D.	1874-1896
Lieut. Col. and Hon. Col. G. Pearson, v.D.	1878-1904

### Chapter 3.

The Stalybridge Old Band—The Stalybridge Ancient Shepherds Band—The Stalybridge Harmonic Society—The Stalybridge Boro. Band.

“The man that hath no music in himself, and is not moved with concord of sweet sounds is fit for treason, stratagems and spoils.”

*Shakespeare.*

#### THE STALYBRIDGE OLD BAND.

**A**BOUT the year 1809-10, a number of working lads formed a “Musical Band,” and having obtained permission, held meetings and rehearsals in a cellar behind the “Golden Fleece.” The contribution of the members was “threepence per week,” and the founder of the society is recorded as being Thomas Avison, who was then 14 years of age. After a year or two the band, having in the meantime obtained several instruments, collapsed, but was re-organised in 1812, when the members agreed to pay “5s. down and two shillings a week, until they had a good band.” The first turn-out of the young musicians was on the Monday before Easter Sunday, 1814; the players were six in number, the instruments being as follows: “Two Clarinets, two Flutes, one Bassoon, and a big Drum.” Armed with a manuscript book which “cost threepence,” and on the front page of which a very elaborate appeal for support had been written, the band sallied forth, and proceeding to the residence of Robert Lees, Esq., Dukinfield, received their first subscription, viz., “a one pound



note ; ” Mr. Astley, of Dukinfield Lodge, gave them £2 zs., and up to the time of his death remained a good supporter ; other gentlemen subscribed, and the amount collected was £24. An additional £12 was obtained in various ways, encouraging the musicians to further efforts. The band was now firmly established, new instruments were purchased, and the playing members were as follows : J. Hollingworth, J. Cottrell, J. Harrison, A. Barker, S. Walker, J. Harrison, J. France, P. Greenwood, A. Lawton, S. Cottrell, H. Nield, J. Booth, T. Avison, J. Lawton, T. France, W. Cottrell, J. Buckley, G. Platt, and J. Sidebottom.

Engagements followed, and the Stalybridge Band filled many appointments from time to time, perhaps the most notable being on the occasion of Henry Hunt’s entry into Manchester on the day of the meeting which terminated in the historical “ Peterloo Massacre ” in 1819.

The Stalybridge Old Band has a record such as few similar societies can boast, for at one period of its career it was absolutely second to none in the Kingdom. Contest after contest saw them victorious, and their name and fame were known wherever the English language was spoken. Between the years 1859 and 1882 the total amount won by the band was £1,449 5s., of which the years 1874-5-6-7 yielded £888 14s. For many years it was the custom to hold grand concerts, when some of the finest singers and musicians of the day were engaged, regardless of expense. The abilities and traditions of the society are well known, and with a

repetition of the support which was given to them in times past, the latent talent of its members would assuredly and undoubtedly assert itself and make the townspeople once more proud of the Stalybridge Old Band.

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### THE ANCIENT SHEPHERDS' BAND.

The Stalybridge Ancient Shepherds' Reed Band was established in the year 1832, and was composed of working men who were members of the Ancient Order of Shepherds Friendly Society.

The following Lodges which then formed the "Stalybridge District" each subscribed a certain sum of money towards the cost of the instruments required, viz.: "The Noah's Ark," "Good Intent," "Free Will," "Loyal Abel No. 1," "Piety No. 140," "Loyal Confidence No. 46," "Industry No. 30," "Triumphant No. 98," "Providence No. 47," "Loyal Abraham No. 4," "Loyal Laban, Stayley." On the 25th July, 1832, a selection committee was deputed to go to Manchester, when they purchased from Mr. Cowlan, a dealer in musical instruments, the following: "Four Clarinets, three Flutes, one Key Bugle, two Slide Horns, one Trumpet, two Trombones, and one Bass Horn." The cost of the instruments was £36, of which £22 was then paid, it being agreed that the remainder should be paid by instalments of £2 per month. Every player, upon joining the band, pledged himself to pay the sum of £3 10s., and when he had done so he was

accredited a "full member." Mr. William Woolley, who was one of the prime movers in the formation of the Band, was originally a "Celloist," and was also a Clarionet player in the Old Band, which was at one time a Reed Band. Mr. Woolley was selected as leader, and occupied that position for nearly thirty years.

The original members of the Band were the following : Thomas Avison, Robert Lawton, James Lawton, John Nield, James Booth, James Crosby, William Band, Robert Winterbottom, William Woolley, Robert Etchells, Samuel Nield, Walter Garside, Edward Woolley, James Nield, Hugh Broadbent, and James Swindells. A quaint entry in one of the Band's records is as follows :—

"Moved and seconded that any player calling Avison names shall be fined sixpence, and if he doesn't pay, that the same be stopped out of his contributions."

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### THE STALYBRIDGE HARMONIC SOCIETY.

The origination of this society was the result of a dispute at the King Street Chapel, between the choir and minister, through which the principal part of the choir left that place of worship, but, being desirous of keeping up the standard of their abilities as musicians, they agreed to practise at each other's houses until such times as they might be able to obtain a settled abode. These homely rehearsals went on, until the members gained confidence, and it was decided to form

a musical society, to which was given the title of "The Stalybridge Harmonic Society;" the date is given as July, 1844. As the membership increased, a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Rev. T. Floyd, vicar of Holy Trinity, who allowed them to practise in the Castle Hall Schoolroom, then situated next to the "Castle Inn." The society went with the school when it migrated to the Foresters' Hall, and again when the new Castle Hall schools were erected, at which place the rehearsals were held until the Educational Authorities required the room for their own use.

The first members included the following: Samuel Garlick, Hugh Platt, Samuel Ashton, John Goddard, Dan Downs, John Downs, W. H. Garlick, John Bradbury, Allen Avison, John Avison, Amanda Lee, Elizabeth Garlick, Martha Sunderland, and others.

The first public performance was given in the Foresters' Hall, from which time the society appeared annually. As the society grew it became more ambitious, and Handel's oratorio of "Samson" was performed in Stalybridge Town Hall, followed successively by "Judas Maccabæus," "Joshua," "Solomon," "The Redemption," and "Israel in Egypt." Following these productions came Mendelssohn's "Elijah," "St. Paul," "Hymn of Praise," and a great number of minor works. In later years the society produced a number of operas and operettas, viz., "Robin Hood," "Martha," "Masaniello," "Olivette," "Rip Van Winkle," etc., with full spectacular effects.

The first musical conductor was Samuel Garlick, who held the position until his death, March 22, 1885, his successor being Alexander Owen, who was appointed in April, 1885, resigned March 13, 1892, and was succeeded in the following May by the present conductor, Mr. John Garlick.

The following were the chief supporters of the society in its early days: Rev. W. W. Hoare, Rev. Thomas Floyd, Robert Platt, Esq., John Cheetham, Esq., Henry Bayley, Esq., David Harrison, Esq., Abel Harrison, Esq., James Wilkinson, Esq., Dr. Hopwood, and Ralph Bates, Esq.

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### THE BORO' BAND.

This Band was founded in March, 1871, and held its first meetings and rehearsals at the Moulders' Arms, Grasscroft Street, its first secretary being Mr. Dan Fielding.

The requisite instruments were subscribed for by honorary members, and subsequently purchased from Mr. Joseph Higham, Manchester, the first consignment being delivered at the headquarters of the band "on a wheelbarrow."

The founder and first conductor was Mr. Alexander Owen, who still holds the office, and is deeply interested in the welfare of the society. The first playing members were as follows: A. Owen, J. A. Schofield, W. Schofield, H. Schofield, John Wild, J. Speke, S. Tootill, R. Mellor,

J. Mellor, W. Swift, and W. Barnes. So rapid was the growth in efficiency of the players that they took part in a contest at Belle Vue, in 1872, and from this time forth few amateur bands were more successful in the contesting field, for when they had been in existence little more than two years, at a contest at Kingston, Hyde, they came second to Meltham, gaining a prize of £20, and beating the famous Black Dyke Band.

Some time later at Pemberton they defeated "Besses-o'-th'-Barn," and at Lindley, the celebrated "Leeds Forge." In October, 1888, at a contest at the Irish Exhibition, London, the band won the highest value in prizes ever brought to the town, viz., £42 in cash and one B Flat Tenor Trombone, value £14 14s. Many of the instruments used by the players to-day are the trophies of bygone victories, several having been won single-handed by Mr. Owen, his first "prize cornet" being a cherished relic.

For 25 years the Band was known as the 4th C.R.V. (Boro' Band). Its founder and conductor wrote several special marches for the Band, including "Edith," "Silver Moonlight Winds are Blowing," and the "Boro."

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## Chapter 4.

The Aged People's Tea Party—The First Committee, Friends, and Supporters—The Foresters' Hall—The Thespian Society of 1814—Ridge Hill Lanes Institute.

“Learn to live well, that thou may'st die so too,  
To live and die is all we have to do.”

*Sir John Denham.*

### THE AGED PEOPLE'S TEA PARTY.

**T**HE origination of this annual festival had its birth in the minds of a few working men, chiefly Odd-fellows connected with the “Widow and Orphans' Fund.” A committee was formed, subscriptions sought, and the response being encouraging, enabled the promoters to provide a suitable tea and entertainment for the old folk of both sexes who had attained the age of “three score years and ten.” The committee consisted of the following :—

Henry Higginbottom.	George Garside.	John Tymms.
Jonathan Sanderson.	Joshua Saxon.	John Slack.
Ben Bright.	Jer'h. Walton.	Geo. Chappel.
John Mather.	David Cooper.	
Alfred Nield, Chairman.	William Ward, Vice-chairman.	
Thomas Hodson, Secretary.	Betty Worrall, Treasurer.	

The list of subscriptions is still in existence. The sum collected was £26 1s., in sums ranging from 1s. to £1, and there is scarcely a well-known name of the time missing.

The party was held in the Stalybridge Town Hall, on New Year's Day, 1860. The Stalybridge Old Band and a party of Glee Singers were in attendance. The Mayor, Thomas Hadfield Sidebottom, Esq., presided, being supported by Alderman Hopwood, Councillor Bates, Henry Bayley, Esq., Rev. J. R. Stephens, Mr. Lowerth Davis, Mr. Abel Swann, Mr. Samuel Hurst (the champion of England), etc., etc.

The guests thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality of their friends, and mingling music, jest, and speech-making together, the first "Old Folks' Tea Party" passed pleasantly over, inaugurating the series of annual parties which have been continued to the present time.

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### THE FORESTERS' HALL.

About the year 1835, the members of the Foresters' Lodges in Stalybridge District, viz. : "Felicity, Justice, Forest Oak, Laurel Leaf, St. George, and Decision, comprising about 420 persons, decided to erect a building to be known as the "Foresters' Hall." A building committee was formed, consisting of the following persons :—J. Faulkner, J. Hampson, John Hallsworth, H. Derby, J. Bates, J. Bold, J. Wood, G. Chadwick, J. Cowgill, A. Harrop, J. Chadwick, J. Lee, R. Howard, W. Quarmby, J. Bradbury, and J. Greenhalch. The plans of the building were drawn by John Hallsworth. The cost was £2,200, defrayed by the contributions of the "Foresters."



The foundation stone was laid on Monday, July 25th, 1836, and the proceedings are alluded to as follows:—

“A procession of the various Orders in the town assembled on the New Road to the New Market or Town Hall, when they were arranged as follows:—Three gentlemen on horseback, the stone-layer or spokesman, the building committee of the Order, the stone getters, the stone masons, the joiners, Band, the Independent Order of Oddfellows, the Ancient Druids, the Modern Druids, Band, the Loyal Ancient Shepherds, the Gardeners and the Foresters.”

The building was completed and opened with ceremony. During the Christmas and New Year Holidays, 1848-9, a memorable entertainment and exhibition of oil paintings, curiosities, etc., was held at this place. At one period there was a large organ, a splendid library, and night schools in connection with the Order at this Institution.

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#### THE THESPIAN SOCIETY OF 1814.

The following gleanings are of interest to the patrons of the drama:—There was one society in those days which deserves a passing notice. It had for its object the improvement of the elocutionary powers of its members. Known locally as “The Thespian Society,” it was also denominated “The Spouting Club,” and its membership comprised about a dozen individuals, including the following:—John Lees, William Binns, Thomas Kenworthy, John Bramall, Ezra Marsland,

George Smith, Alfred Cheetham, John Wardle, John Taylor, and others. John Lees was the scene painter, whilst William Binns was the stage carpenter. The society gave periodical public performances in the club room of the Angel Inn. The price of admission was usually a shilling, and the local gentry patronised the entertainments, which were generally of a Shakesperian character. One of the drawbacks of the society was that they could never entice the fair sex to join them as members, and were thus compelled to engage professional ladies from the Manchester theatres.

When rehearsing a new play for production, it was the custom of the members to visit Manchester and witness a public performance of the same, which meant walking to Ashton, boarding the coach, and journeying to the theatre, returning to Stalybridge early next morning.

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#### RIDGE HILL LANE INSTITUTE.

This institution was founded about 1860, and in the early days of 1861 had reached a position which enabled its members to pass the following resolution :—January 16th, 1861. “ Moved by Mr. W. Moores and seconded by T. Barnes, that Messrs. J. Miller, R. Mills, G. Nuttall, J. Duffy and T. Warburton form a deputation to wait upon Messrs. D. and T. Harrison, and request as a favour the granting of a more commodious place for the members to meet in.” The title of the society became the “Ridge Hill Lane Working Men’s Institute,

Library and Reading Room, established February 16th, 1861." The first officers were the following:—President, T. A. Harrison; Patron, D. Harrison, Esq. Committee, J. Lomas, T. Barnes, W. Moores, J. Duffy, C. Nuttall, J. Miller, J. Mitchell, R. Mills, J. Knott, T. James, T. Warburton.

The Institution possesses a museum and library, and has also a microscope for the use of its members. A very interesting relic hangs upon the walls, being the original design for the Jethro Tinker Memorial, the working committee of which had its inception and held the majority of its meetings in this Institution, under the chairmanship of Samuel Hill.

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## Chapter 5.

The Stamford Park Movement—Newspaper Correspondence—Preliminary Meetings—Opposition—List of Subscriptions—Opening by Lord Stamford—Turnover to the Corporations.

"There is a volume of associations in the very name."

*Washington Irving.*

### THE STAMFORD PARK MOVEMENT.

**T**HE scheme of a "Public Park for the District" originated on the 12th July, 1855, exactly eighteen years before Stamford Park was opened by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. In the "Reporter" of that date a leading article deals with the idea, and on the 22nd of September following, a writer under the *nom-de-plume* of "Nil Desperandum" requested the

editor of the "Reporter" "to persist in his advocacy of a public park."

On the 3rd May, 1856, Mr. H. Roche, of 56, Margaret Street, Henry Square, Ashton-under-Lyne, again opened the question. On the 7th June, the "Reporter" helped the idea by means of its columns. During the ensuing week the meeting room of the Young Men's Improvement Society, in connection with St. Peter's Church, Ashton-under-Lyne, was placed at the service of the public, and a meeting was held.

On the 16th June a meeting of working men was held in the Ashton-under-Lyne Town Hall, Mr. J. Farron in the chair. Speeches and suggestions were made, and the meeting was of a most interesting character. The idea, however, met with bitter opposition, which was parried by a stirring address to the people. One paragraph is quoted to show the spirit of determination possessed by the promoters.

"We want a park . . . a spot upon God's earth that we can call our own; where our lads may pitch their wickets, and our girls hang their swings, and where the less nimble may toss the quoit, and roll the bowl, without fear of action for trespass."

Month followed month with suggestions and criticisms—they trod upon each other's heels. Meetings were held, an official committee appointed, and subscription books were issued to those desirous of collecting funds for the object in view.

In the "Reporter" for the 15th June, 1857, the amount subscribed is published, viz., £235 18s. 8d.

On the 27th March, 1858, a letter addressed to the Editor of the "Reporter," by H. T. Darnton, Esq., mentioned the "Samuel Oldham" bequests, but from some cause or other the scheme became dormant; it may be that the impending American War affected it. After the lapse of many years the idea was again revived by H. T. Darnton, Esq. The Highfield Estate was on sale, and thought to be a suitable place for a park, so Mr. Darnton communicated his idea to Mr. Joseph Shawcross, of Stalybridge, and that gentleman ventilated the matter amongst his friends and fellow-townsmen. The result was that after an interval of about thirteen years the scheme was revived, and in June, 1871, we find references once more to "The Public Park."

It was stated that the "Oldham Bequest" was still obtainable, that "£7,000" was waiting, the additional warning being also given, "that a purchase must be made before September 5th, 1871."

On the 12th August, 1871, a local writer took up the question, and appealed to "The People of Stalybridge to co-operate and hold a public meeting without delay."

It is said that the "Talbot Inn" was the place where a few working men foregathered and discussed the matter.

A chairman, Mr. Harrison, was appointed, and the following names submitted as gentlemen fitted to form a deputation representing the town in a proposed interview with the Earl of Stamford and Warrington:—The Mayor, John Hyde, Esq., J. J. Wilkinson, Esq., James Kirk, Esq., John Ridgway, Esq., Ralph Bates,

Esq., Robert Hopwood, Esq., J. F. Cheetham, Esq., and Thomas Harrison, Esq.

On the 16th August, 1871, a deputation representing Ashton-under-Lyne, Dukinfield and Stalybridge waited upon Lord Stamford at the Old Hall, Ashton-under-Lyne. His Lordship received them and listened attentively, and in reply undertook to "remit the chief rent on the Highfield Estate," and further, "offered a tract of land upon very easy terms."

In conclusion the Earl said:—"Do not think of failure by any means; go on and do what you can, and if you do not raise as much money as you could wish—see me again."

Another meeting was held at Stalybridge, this time at "The Angel Inn," at which R. P. Whitworth presided. An appeal was made for subscriptions to cover preliminary printing expenses, in response to which the sum of £10 was placed before the Chairman in a few minutes.

The next important move was a Public Meeting, called "by requisition" in the Town Hall, Stalybridge, August 24th, 1871. The Mayor, John Hyde, Esq., occupied the chair. Letters were read from J. R. Coulthart, Esq., Ralph Bates, Esq., etc. Mr. Benjamin Rigby moved a resolution embodying a number of suggestions and ideas, which was carried unanimously. Mr. James Saville, Mr. James France, Mr. Joseph Shawcross, Mr. J. Cocker, Mr. George Cheetham, and Councillor Burnley were appointed to represent Stalybridge on the Joint Provisional Park Committee. The

Mayor, John Hyde, Esq., consented to act as their Chairman, and Mr. Allen Harrison was appointed permanent secretary. Keen opposition manifested itself, which only served to bind the promoters more firmly together. On the 13th April, 1872, the well-wishers and workers for the movement were sent into ecstasy by the announcement that "Francis Dukinfield Astley, Esq., had requested the Trustees of his estate to hand over the sum of £2,000, as a proof of his sympathy with the scheme."

The Executive Committee, therefore, issued the following list of subscriptions, which had already been promised:—

	£	s.	d.
Francis Dukinfield Astley, Esq.....	2,000	0	0
Henry Thomas Darnton, Esq. ..	500	0	0
Thomas Walton Mellor, Esq., M.P.	250	0	0
William Leech, Esq. .. ..	250	0	0
George Heginbottom, Esq. ..	200	0	0
George Mellor, Esq. .. ..	200	0	0
John Chadwick, Esq. .. ..	200	0	0
Rev. Thomas Radley .. ..	200	0	0
Joseph Fletcher, Esq. .. ..	200	0	0
Colonel Mellor .... ..	200	0	0
Nathaniel Buckley, Esq., M.P. ..	100	0	0
Ralph Bates, Esq. .. ..	100	0	0
Thomas Heginbottom, Esq. ..	100	0	0
B. M. Kenworthy, Esq. .. ..	100	0	0
Booth Mason, Esq. .. ..	100	0	0
William Bass, Esq. .. ..	100	0	0

	£	s.	d.
J. J. Wilkinson, Esq. .. ..	100	0	0
Working Men of Stalybridge ..	250	0	0
April 20—			
B. M. Kenworthy, Esq. .. ..	150	0	0
Frank Andrew, Esq. .. ..	50	0	0
Jabez Waterhouse, Esq. .. ..	50	0	0
Rev. Thomas Eagar .. ..	50	0	0
May 11—			
Waterside Mill Company.. ..	50	0	0
June 15—			
Miss Mellor.. .. .	50	0	0

In July the total sum subscribed amounted to nearly £7,000.

On the 12th of July, 1873, the ideal of the promoters became a fact.

“Stamford Park,” the dream of years, was at last a reality. Ashton-under-Lyne and Stalybridge were, for once at least, united. Processions, with bands of music, were the order of the day. The Stalybridge Town Council met at one o’clock and held a special meeting in the Council Chamber, when formal resolutions were passed, and the common seal attached to the two Illuminated Addresses which had been prepared for presentation to Lord Stamford and F. D. Astley, Esq.

The Mayor, Ralph Bates, Esq., accompanied by the Aldermen, Councillors, and Corporation officials, and a procession composed of all sections of the community proceeded to the Park (joining a similar procession from Ashton-under-Lyne) where the memorable ceremony of



opening was performed amidst the cheers and acclamations of a delighted multitude, by Lord and Lady Stamford, and F. D. Astley, Esq. We quote from a record of the time, as follows :—

“ Liberals, Tories, Radicals, and Whigs ; Monarchists and Republicans ; Religious Men and Atheists ; all forgot their differences and united to make the town as gay as possible.”

The day's rejoicings and demonstrations reached their last stage in the evening, when a Banquet was held in the large Drill Hall at Ashton-under-Lyne.

Some 500 gentlemen met and dined together, after which Lord and Lady Stamford, F. D. Astley, Esq., Sir Willoughby Jones, and others joined the assembly, and speech-making was the order of the hour.

A final effort was the monstre Bazaar, which was held in the Ashton Drill Hall, the financial result of which surprised even the most sanguine of its promoters. The magnificent sum of £4,750 was obtained from the Bazaar, for the benefit of Stamford Park.

Amongst those who worked hard in the rank and file on the Executive Committee were the following :— Allen Harrison, Secretary ; Benjamin Rigby, Joseph Shawcross, James Saville, Samuel Cooper, — Hibbert, John Heap, James Hill, John Burton, Samuel Shaw, T. Bullen, and many others.

A distinguishing badge worn by the Joint Committee was a circular disc made of black morocco leather inscribed in gilt letters with the words : “ Stamford Park Committee ; Ashton, Stalybridge and District.” A

later Joint Committee was composed of the following :—George Mellor, Chairman ; Allen Harrison, Secretary ; W. H. Waterhouse, B. B. Kenworthy, Ralph Bates, H. T. Darnton, Robert Stanley, Mark Fentem, Squire Farron, Benjamin Rigby, James France, John Duffy, Abel Swann, Edward France, John Kiddy.

There are only three survivors of the Stalybridge section of this Committee to-day—Benjamin Rigby, Robert Stanley, J.P., and Mark Fentem, J.P.

Stamford Park was “ taken over ” on the 13th July, 1891, by the Corporations of Stalybridge and Ashton-under-Lyne. The extent of the land within its boundaries to-day is given as about 63 acres. Originally the greater part of the Park was in the Borough of Stalybridge, but the addition of the portion known as the “ Dingle ” almost balanced the acreage in the respective boroughs, viz., 30 acres in Stalybridge, and 33 acres in Ashton-under-Lyne.

Considering the close proximity of the numerous manufactories and mills, Stamford Park may be fairly reckoned as one of the prettiest and most attractive public parks in the North of England, and it would have been gratifying to those who worked hard for the movement years ago to have known that their labours for the public good had achieved such a grand result. The present Joint Committee and the officials are to be complimented on their supervision and work, and, although there is at present no tribute within the precincts of Stamford Park to the memory of its originators and benefactors, the time will come when a suitable memorial shall

reveal the facts to the visitor and enquiring stranger. The "Samuel Oldham Bequest," the exertions of H. T. Darnton, Esq., and the munificent gifts of Lord Stamford and F. D. Astley, Esq., are in themselves worthy of grateful remembrance in marble and gold.

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## Chapter 6.

The Co-operative Movement—Formation of Committee—Opening of Stores—Early Struggles—Growth—Present Position.

"United we stand, divided we fall."

### THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

**T**HE Co-operative Movement as we know it came into existence about the year 1844. A number of working men in the town of Rochdale formed a society, the history of which, under the title of "The Rochdale Pioneers," was written by George Jacob Holyoake, Esq. The scheme was nick-named "The Weaver's Dream" by its opponents, but it has survived all ridicule, and has become a recognised institution of the country. Fifteen years passed before the idea was adopted in Stalybridge, when, in the Spring of 1859, a few working men decided to hold a meeting for the purpose of endeavouring to form a Co-operative Society. The date was fixed, the time appointed, and the eventful meeting was held at the house of James Cook in Harrop Street, Stalybridge. On the 7th March, 1859, there

assembled the following persons: Henry Pool, Alexander Maxwell, Ambrose Jackson, Charles Gaskell, Thomas Phillips, Thomas Baxter, John Peacock, Daniel Woolley, William Haynes, Joseph Edgar, and Johanan Booth. The business of the meeting was the appointment of the chairman, Johanan Booth, and a committee, as follows: Charles Gaskell, William Haynes, Daniel Woolley, Alexander Maxwell and Ambrose Jackson. Johanan Booth was appointed treasurer, and Thomas Baxter secretary, for the time being.

It was decided "that the shares should be £1 each, and that no member have less than one share nor more than five shares each. That the contributions be brought to the house of James Cook every Monday fortnight, betwixt the hours of 7 and 9 of the clock. That 1,000 handbills be printed for delivery amongst the public."

The first general meeting took place on the 21st March, 1859, when John France, Johanan Booth, and John Bradbury were appointed Trustees, and William Haynes and Joseph Woolhouse money stewards for the next three months.

It was also resolved "That any officer being absent after 7 o'clock on any meeting night be fined threepence, to go to the incidental fund." A regular system of meetings was inaugurated, and the membership increased rapidly. Suitable premises were sought in which to commence business, the shop now occupied by Mr. Marsden, plumber, Water Street, being the place selected. A "Special General Meeting" and election

of officers was held on June 23, 1859, at which the following members were elected to officiate on the "Management Committee:" Joseph Edgar, Jonathan Blacker, Joseph Woolhouse, Charles Gaskell, John L. Porter, James Heywood, Daniel Woolley, Thomas Ellis, and Joseph Allen; Johanan Booth, Treasurer; Thomas Baxter, Secretary; Alexander Maxwell and Joseph Allsop, Auditors; John France, Abel Frederick Wood and James Cook, Trustees; Robert Winterbottom and Joseph Bailey, Money Stewards. Arbitrators, Matthew Hutchinson, Tom Milburn, Frank Farrow, Robert Whitehead and Nathan Pickering.

Preparations for commencing business started in earnest. The outgoing tenant of the premises was paid for sundry articles which he wished to leave, and the making of shop fixtures, etc., was proceeded with chiefly by members of the committee, one of whom proposed "that the counters have baywood tops." Large posters were printed and distributed announcing the opening of the "Stores" to the public, and a shopman was advertised for, and appointed. Travellers were invited to call, provision merchants and tea men written to for samples and wholesale prices, and the Society sent its representatives to Manchester to purchase "scales, canisters, and other utensils." The "Stores" were opened in November, 1859, and the first week's takings amounted to the sum of £84. The old records are full of quaint minutes and resolutions which, however, could be of little interest to the general reader. A very interesting memorial in connection with the early days

of the Society was hung in the "Jubilee Exhibition" and was the centre of much notice, being an enlarged photograph of the "Committee" for the years 1862-3-4. The group was composed of the following well-known townsmen, John Hackett, George Rushton, William Harrison, John Ridgway, Charles Jones, Matthew Hutchinson, Joseph Kinsey, Robert Cobham, Samuel Hadfield (Secretary), James Lawton, John Bamford, David Stringer and William Roberts.

The Society had been in existence for two years when the "Dark Hour" of the Cotton Panic arrived, for in November, 1862, there were no less than 57,000 people receiving relief from the Manchester Central Relief Committee, the highest record reached during that terrible period. The foregoing facts were unknown to whoever wrote the following paragraph for insertion in the quarterly report, issued in October, 1862. The words were both plucky and prophetic.

"The Committee are happy that they are enabled now to publish a full and correct account of the real condition of the Society (which they are convinced has never been done before). It may be fairly inferred that it has now passed through its infantile diseases, and we therefore feel confident that it will flourish and pay dividends that will satisfy and benefit its members, confound and disappoint its enemies, and make certain individuals blush and shame that it not only survives, but that it actually prospers after their flagrant attempts to overthrow it. . . . The Committee are sorry that they cannot pay any dividend this time. . ."

Since its humble beginning the Society has progressed and prospered to an extent never anticipated by its founders in their wildest hopes. The "Weaver's Dream" has proved itself a substantial reality. From a return issued in February, 1907, we extract the following items :—

Number of Members,	3,666
Dividend paid in 1906,	£17,608
Members' Shares,	£49,196
Interest paid to Members,	£2,326
Persons Employed,	108
Wages Paid,	£6,332
Number of Shops and Branches,	20

Donations to Institutions, etc. :—

Infirmaries, etc.,	£44 8s. 6d.
Cotton Growing Association,	£10 0s. 0d.
Stalybridge Technical School,	£25 0s. 0d.
Volunteer Prize Fund,	£5 0s. 0d.

It will be seen by reference to the above figures that the Members' Share Claims, commencing in March, 1859, at a few shillings, have grown to the presentable and substantial sum of nearly £50,000.





## PART VIII.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

#### Chapter 1.

##### OUR LOCAL WORTHIES.

Dr. John Whitehead, Physician and Biographer—John Bradbury, F. L. S., Naturalist and Explorer—Jethro Tinker, Botanist and Entomologist, our local Linnæus—Lieutenant John Buckley, V. C., one of the defenders of the Delhi Magazine.

“The period of obscurity is passed.”

*Bulwer Lytton.*

#### DR. JOHN WHITEHEAD.

##### PHYSICIAN AND BIOGRAPHER.

“This was one of those men whose voices have gone forth  
to the ends of the earth.”

*Washington Irving.*

**J**OHN WHITEHEAD was born at Stalybridge about the year 1740. His parents were of humble position, and had left the old Dissenting congregation to join the Moravians, about two years before the birth of their son.

John Whitehead was educated in the Moravian school at Dukinfield, and received a classical training,



a privilege which fell to the lot of very few of his class. Very early in life he became deeply affected with religious aspirations, and ultimately became connected with the Wesleyan movement. Time passed on, and Whitehead met a preacher of Wesley's doctrine, named Matthew Mayer, a native of Stockport, who frequently came to Stalybridge to conduct open-air services.

John Whitehead became a sound convert to Methodism and graduated into a lay preacher of power and influence. He left Stalybridge and went to Bristol, where he settled, but the result of his labours was financially so small, that, in order to sustain himself, he went into business as a linen draper, and shortly afterwards married. The young preacher was not successful behind the drapery counter, the business venture proving a failure, consequently he quitted Bristol and migrated to London, where he joined the "Society of Friends."

Here his marked personality and his abilities speedily received recognition; he became prominent as a speaker, and was selected as the conductor of a large boarding-house connected with the society at Wandsworth.

At the age of 39 (September 16th, 1779) he entered at Leyden University as a medical student, and graduated as M.D. on the 4th of February, 1780. Such were the abilities of this man that, within the space of twelve months, on the death of John Kooystra, Physician to the London Dispensary (19th January, 1781), he was appointed his successor. Other distinctions awaited him, for on March 25th, 1782, he was admitted a Licentiate of the College of Physicians. In 1784 he was

a candidate for the office of physician to the London Hospital, but, although at the election for the post he had a majority of votes, he never filled the position.

He was at this period the medical adviser of John and Charles Wesley, who were very much attached to him, and endeavoured to win him back to their ranks, which they eventually succeeded in doing. Dr. Whitehead was now a powerful preacher, and did great service in the pulpit, being heart and soul in the work. He would willingly have quitted his profession and practice if John Wesley would have ordained him. As the medical adviser and attendant of the founder of Methodism, Dr. Whitehead spent much time with his patient in his last illness, being present by the bedside when John Wesley passed away. Dr. Whitehead did himself credit in the preaching of the great divine's funeral oration, which was of such eloquence and power that it was printed and ran through four editions, realising the sum of £200, which Dr. Whitehead handed over to the Wesleyan Society.

Along with two others, Dr. Whitehead was appointed by John Wesley as "Literary Executors," it being understood that, conjointly, they should write the "Life of Wesley."

Shortly after the decease of John Wesley, at a meeting of preachers called for the purpose, it was proposed by James Rogers, and agreed to by the other executors, that Dr. Whitehead, being the man with most leisure, should undertake the task, and receive a hundred guineas for it. Accordingly all the documents,

papers, etc., left by the deceased leader were handed over to him, and the work was commenced. Jealousy appears to have arisen amongst certain members of the Society, and a dispute arose which led to Dr. Whitehead being asked to return the papers entrusted to him. This he refused to do, and at a meeting, December 9th, 1791, his name was ordered to be removed from the list of preachers. Dr. Whitehead offered to compromise with the committee appointed to deal with the matter, but they refused, and the dispute went on until it led to litigation, which was eventually stopped, the Society agreeing to pay all costs, which amounted to £2,000. Dr. Whitehead completed his task and published his book in 1793. Three years later (1796) he returned all the documents and papers to the Wesleyan Society, and in 1797 he was welcomed back to the old fold, and re-instated in the circle.

His health now began to fail and he retired into private life, living for a few years at a house in Fountain Court, Old Bethlehem, where he attained the age of 64 years, and died on the 7th March, 1804.

For a period of seven days his body "lay in state." Some of those who had known him from his youth travelled from Stalybridge by coach to witness his funeral. His remains were laid in "Wesley's vault," at the City Road Chapel, London, amidst signs of regret and respect. He left a widow, children, and grand-children. There is no definitely known portrait of him with this exception, that in the engraving of the picture representing the "Death of John Wesley"

there is a full-length figure standing by the bedside, which is said to be the authentic likeness of Dr. John Whitehead, physician and biographer.

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JOHN BRADBURY, F.L.S.

NATURALIST AND EXPLORER.

“The Indian knows his place of rest, deep in the cedar's shade.”

*Felicia Hemans.*

John Bradbury was born at Souracre Fold, or Far Souracre, Stalybridge, about the year 1765. The family tombs with their various inscriptions, and which are to be seen in the old burial ground of St. George's Chapel, Cocker Hill, have been of great service to the writer, in verifying many facts not hitherto known concerning the Bradburys.

The family numbered seven persons all told, comprised of the parents, one daughter, and four sons, of whom John was the youngest.

A very interesting account exists of Bradbury's early years, his future biographer, fortunately, having been his playmate in childhood, his companion in youth, and his friend and confidant in maturity.

Little has been written about Bradbury for nearly fifty years, and it is the desire of the writer to brush away the cobwebs of gathering obscurity, and retrieve from partial oblivion the name and works of our almost forgotten and unknown townsman.

As a little lad he was taught in the school of John Taylor, a local genius, who dabbled in mathematics

and the study of botany, and whose humble academy was situated on Cocker Hill.

The future explorer was remarkably precocious, even in his early years, exhibiting great interest in natural history and wild-life. The schoolmaster saw and encouraged his pupil's leanings, and occasionally took the lad with him on his botanical rambles, whilst Bradbury's father bought him a copy of the works of Linnæus, which he studied fervently.

Leaving school he went into one of the primitive mills, but even then he found leisure time sufficient to enable him to continue his studies. At the age of eighteen he had established a night school at which he taught the young men of his acquaintance what he himself had learned. He had acquired a microscope and a pair of astronomical globes, and by means of these appliances distributed, free of charge to his scholars, food for the mind and brain. He revelled in the explanation of the construction and habits of insects and flowers, and fixed in the sides of one of a number of bee-hives which he possessed two small panes of glass, so that his pupils might see the wonderful honey-makers at their work.

He contributed articles to the botanical journals of that time, and his name and fame soon became well known and recognised amongst the eminent scientific authorities.

At the age of twenty-two his writings and discoveries were stirring the thoughts of the naturalists in the Metropolis, the consequence of which was that Sir Joseph Banks wrote to our subject, and as a sequel of the

correspondence John Bradbury was invited to London, where he was presented to many noted gentlemen, introduced to and admitted a member of the Linnean Society.

Sir John Parnell, His Grace the Duke of Leinster, Mr. Legh of Lyme, and other eminent patrons and devotees of the sciences of Botany and Natural History, recognised and encouraged the country-bred aspirant. For these patrons he did much work in organising and laying out their various country seats and parks. He, however, does not appear to have been partial to lengthy engagements, preferring occasional spells of liberty and freedom. At one period he made a pedestrian tour of Ireland, and thereby discovered many new plants, his ambition being to add to the store of knowledge already amassed.

Passing over the middle years of his life, we find that in the early part of last century he lived occasionally at Manchester, periodically migrating between that town and Liverpool. At the latter place he met that noble minded man, William Roscoe, Esq., who introduced him to Mr. Bullock, at that time the head of the Liverpool Museum. A Society which had for its principles the diffusion of scientific knowledge, and was known as the Liverpool Philosophical Society, was at this period very active, and it appears John Bradbury was appointed corresponding secretary. The patrons and supporters of the society included the Earl of Derby and Col. Leigh-Phillips, and it would appear that the increasing demand for a larger supply of cotton for the manufactures in this country had been under

consideration. The supply had been dependent upon the West Indies, and it is presumable that the new Republic of the United States, with its vast area unknown and unexplored, had attracted the attention of the Liverpool Society. Be that as it may, John Bradbury was selected and engaged to undertake a hazardous journey of survey and exploration through the country known as the southern part of the United States of America.

At this time (1809) Bradbury would be about 43 or 44 years of age, and is described as being in the prime of manhood, swarthy, broad-shouldered, and of medium height, amiable, yet stubborn in disposition, temperate in his habits, and a most excellent marksman. He was fond of music, active on his feet, and determined in his methods and opinions.

Prepared with letters of introduction to the President of the United States, James Madison, and also to the British Consul at Washington, he left England in the spring of 1809, and was met and received by the representatives of the American Societies, to whom his labours had become known. This welcome impressed Bradbury very much, and in after years our townsman always spoke with feeling and gratefulness of the kindness, the hospitality and universal civility which he had ever met with at the hands of the American people.

If the reader would revel in a record of perilous adventure, hair-breadth escapes, and exciting yet truthful details, let him consult "Travels in the interior of America in the years 1809, 1810 and 1811, including a description of Upper Louisiana, together with the

States of Ohio, Indiana, and Tennessee, and containing remarks and observations useful to persons emigrating to those countries. By John Bradbury, F.L.S., London, Corresponding Secretary of the Liverpool Philosophical Society, and Honorary Member of the Literary and Philosophical Societies of New York, United States of America." A copy of this book, published in 1817, may be seen at the Mechanics' Institution.

On his return to this country Bradbury was pressed to publish his diary and other writings, which he did. The years between 1812 and 1817 were probably spent in writing and publishing his book. The selling of the work and subsequent collecting of the money would entail much further labour, and to make a long story short, the publication of his works ruined John Bradbury; the result was that his future became darkened by the clouds of adversity.

There can be no greater grief to a man who honestly knows that he has done his duty than to feel that his labours are unappreciated. After his manifold work, his valuable discoveries, and the devotion of the best days of his life to the cause of natural research his future prospects were obscured and indefinite, and in the depth of despair he resolved in his heart, if a chance obtained, to quit his native land for ever.

He little dreamed how soon that chance would present itself. Wandering through the streets of Liverpool one day, he met by accident with an American sea captain, with whom he had formerly been acquainted. His friend was astonished at the condition in which he



found Bradbury, for the latter had almost reached a state of destitution. Explanations having been made, the Yankee, to his honour and credit be it said, kindly gripped the poor fellow's hand, forthwith offering a free passage to America on board his ship for the entire Bradbury family.

Once again the wandering naturalist crossed the western ocean, and on his arrival at New York, his acquaintances who had known him in brighter days welcomed him again with a friendliness which must have been gratifying to the heart of the exile.

Thus, on a foreign strand far away from the old home, which to-day honours his name, John Bradbury found that respect and recognition which were denied him in the land of the brave and the free.

He ultimately became Curator and Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens at St. Louis, where he was honoured and respected by the residents of that city. His family settled in their new home, and with good prospects, Bradbury was now beyond the fear of penury, and with undiminished vigour he continued his researches and investigations. He was often visited by the Indian Chiefs whom he had met in the wilds, and with whom he was always on the most friendly terms.

In the spring of 1825 a strange desire took possession of Bradbury to revisit the haunts of the Red Men, and he forthwith started from the City of St. Louis for that purpose. It may be that the trials of his early years had left their mark; it may be that his life was cut short by accident. Be that as it may, the last record of him

states that he is supposed to have died, and been buried with great solemnity by the Indians somewhere in the valley at the head of the Red River.

To-day the works of our townsman are being eagerly sought for by American agencies, and in a very short time the few copies remaining in the district may drift away.

In conclusion we find that in the 60th year of his age this truly wonderful man, a noble example and a benefactor to his race, became a martyr to the love of liberty, science, and everything that was beautiful and sublime in nature.

We claim for our townsman, John Bradbury, the honourable distinction of having been one of the first white men to explore, survey, and publish an account of the hitherto unknown solitudes, which have since furnished the bulk of the cotton used in Lancashire.

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## JETHRO TINKER.

### OUR LOCAL LINNÆUS.

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gold for a' that."

*Robert Burns.*

Jethro Tinker was born on the 25th September, 1788, his parents at the time residing in a cottage at "North Britain, The Brushes." The farm buildings now known as "North Britain Farm" cover the site.

In his boyhood days he was in service with Mr. Gartside, of Thorncliffe Hall, Hollingworth, and

became a keen botanical student and a naturalist, whilst following his vocation as a shepherd on the breezy uplands and the heather-clad slopes of our local moorlands. There is proof that he was acquainted with John Bradbury, who, it is averred, encouraged young Tinker in his study of wild life.

The father of Jethro Tinker was a man of superior intelligence, and ultimately migrated from North Britain to the village of Mottram, where he combined the vocation of hand-loom weaver with that of school-master. Young Jethro became a hand-loom weaver at the age of 18, but a year or two later, on the introduction of power-looms into Stalybridge, he came and settled in the Vale, which was, with the exception of a very short period, henceforth to be his home.

Jethro Tinker in his prime was a man of exceptionally fine physique, and many of the older residents speak of "the tall, straight-limbed veteran of eighty."

From operative weaver he became over-looker and manager, and for half-a-century there was no better known figure in the town than our subject. In the course of his long life he was alternately shopkeeper, publican, and latterly a gardener, a vocation for which he was admirably fitted.

For upwards of sixty years he was the leader, teacher, and adviser of the botanists and naturalists of this district, and attended their periodical gatherings and meetings up to the end of his life. In the year 1858 he was honoured by his friends, and was the recipient of a public testimonial.

From the early years of his youth to the age of four-score he allowed no opportunity to pass whereby he could add to his collection of specimens, a collection which has few equals in this country, and which was handed by his executors to the "Stamford Park Museum," where it is now housed. Here the visitor may see the life's work of a humble, self-taught man, in the form of a remarkable and interesting exhibition of local butterflies, moths, shells, etc., etc., which to-day are unobtainable. The Herbarium itself contains hundreds upon hundreds of specimens of the vegetation of the district, with notes in the hand-writing of the gifted botanist detailing the date and place where they were gathered. Although unnoticed by the multitude, the "Jethro Tinker Legacy" is worthy of care and preservation, if only for the use of the student and of posterity.

It was the custom of our subject to make long pedestrian journeys during the week-ends in order to gather some particular species of plant or insect—toil and fatigue were unthought of, weather or climatic changes unheeded. Thus did this wonderful man pass along the roadway of life, gleaning and gathering knowledge, not for his own profit alone but for the use of his fellow-men.

A writer of repute, in mentioning Jethro Tinker, said: "He had accumulated more information on the different objects he had made his special study than perhaps any man in his humble sphere of life had done before him."

As a lecturer on botany he had a peculiar charm

which fascinated his listeners and stimulated their interest. He could quote passages from all the known authors as readily as if he had their works before him. This is the more remarkable considering how little he knew of the training and privileges requisite to the student and scholar.

To the very end of his life his memory was undimmed and his mental faculties unimpaired. In his latter days he resided with his son-in-law, Mr. Worthington, Mottram Road, Stalybridge, at whose house, respected and full of years, on the 10th of March, 1871, the grand old warrior doffed his helmet, unbuckled his armour, and laid himself down to sleep.

His remains were borne, escorted by his friends, to Mottram Churchyard, where they rest beneath a flat stone on the north side of the ancient edifice. Scarcely had the dust settled upon his grave ere a movement was initiated for the perpetuation of his memory and worth. A meeting was held in the Naturalists' Club, Ridge Hill Lane, the result of which was the formation of a committee and the ultimate erection of the "Tinker Memorial" in Stamford Park. The disciples of the worthy veteran left no stone unturned in order to raise the necessary funds for their laudable object. The committee, it should be understood, were chiefly working men, yet as a result of their enthusiasm and labours, on the 18th of July, 1874, they had the pleasure of realising their idea in the completion and unveiling of the monument. This was a red-letter day for the botanists and naturalists of Stalybridge, Ashton, and

Dukinfield. Accompanied by two bands of music, the fraternity marched in procession to the Park, where the ceremony was performed.

Amongst the local lovers of nature and wild life the memory of Jethro Tinker has suffered small loss by the lapse of time, for instead of passing into oblivion, it stands out to-day undimmed, unsullied, and even brighter than ever. His self-sacrifice and his gratuitous labours have left behind them a fragrance and a sweetness which serve as a stimulant to his disciples, and which is creative of a veneration for his name which the humble followers in his footsteps will not willingly let die.

It is indeed pleasing to know that whilst a monument of stone perpetuates his worth in the open air, the trophies of his research may be seen in the Museum close by.



### LIEUTENANT JOHN BUCKLEY, V.C.

“And this is fame! For this he fought and bled!  
See his reward! No matter; let him rest.

*Mrs. Miller.*

John Buckley was born about the year 1814, in the village of Stalybridge. His parents at the time resided in a cottage situated on Cocker Hill. Little is to be gleaned about his boyhood, until the period when he went to work as a piecer at the cotton mills of Messrs. Harrison. At a later stage he worked for Messrs. Bayley.

The approach of manhood created a desire for something beyond the narrow limits of a cotton operative's prospects, and, like others of his class, he eventually "listed for a soldier." He appears to have quitted his native town about Christmas or New Year's time, 1832, and we learn that he enlisted for the "Bengal Artillery" at the depôt at Chatham in the January following. He sailed with his regiment from Gravesend for India on the 20th June, 1832, and arrived safely at his destination, proceeding thence to Bengal. Buckley belonged to the 2nd Company of the 4th Battalion of Artillery, but a year later was transferred to the 1st Battalion. Promotion followed, and he was again transferred to the 4th Company, 5th Battalion, at Benares. On the 1st November, 1839, he attained the rank of sergeant, followed a few months later, May 26th, 1840, with an appointment as permanent-staff Conductor.

For a period extending over nearly 17 years he served with credit under various Commandants, improving his position, and gaining experience. Buckley could speak several of the Indian languages like a native.

The "Bengal Veteran Establishment," with which as a soldier of 25 years' Indian service our subject was connected, allowed its non-commissioned officers certain privileges. Buckley had availed himself thereof, and built a bungalow for his wife and family about a mile and a quarter outside the City of Delhi.

Such was the state of affairs on the memorable 10th May, 1857, when the outbreak of the "Indian Mutiny" occurred at Meerut. The rebel forces

reached Delhi on the following day, and after entering the city, demanded the surrender of the magazine and arsenal, where they knew that a large supply of ammunition and arms was stored. The native portion of the magazine garrison deserted and joined the rebels, leaving nine individuals to defend the arsenal. For hours the besieged heroes bravely defended the place, the guns were loaded with a double charge of grape, and round after round was poured into the enemy.

Having exhausted all the available ammunition, and unable to descend to the magazine for more, a hurried consultation was held, and it was decided that, rather than let the rebels obtain possession of the stores and arms, the place should be blown up. A train of gunpowder was laid to the magazine as a last resource. At length it was found that the mutineers had gained access to the fort, the signal was given, and in an instant a terrific explosion shook Delhi to its foundations. Hundreds of the mutineers were buried in the falling ruins, the place being veritably "blown to atoms," and five out of the nine gallant defenders perishing at the post of duty.

Buckley's escape was a miracle. He plunged into the River Jumna, and swam across under a hail of bullets, one of which became embedded in his arm. No longer a young man, for the quarter of a century spent in a torrid climate had left its impression, worn out, wounded, and faint from loss of blood, our subject gained a place of safety, only to fall senseless amongst the sedges on the river's brink. On recovering



consciousness he found himself a prisoner, along with a number of British residents, in the hands of the rebels.

Buckley now heard from an eye-witness the story of the massacre of his wife and family by the mutineers, at the very time when he was helping to defend the magazine. The gallant soldier broke down and begged his captors to end his life, to which request a Sepoy officer replied: "You are too brave a man to die like that."

Buckley escaped from his captors and joined the British troops, seeking death continually, volunteering repeatedly for the performance of some forlorn hope, and risking his life at every opportunity, particularly at the battle of Budlee-Ka-Sarai, on the 8th June, 1857, and for these services he was promoted to the rank of Deputy-Assistant Commissary of Ordnance.

A severe attack of sunstroke, the third from which he had suffered, prostrated him at this time, but he gradually recovered and was appointed Provost Marshal of the force at Meerut, where it was his duty, during his stay, to superintend the executions of 150 rebel murderers.

Signs of returning sickness became apparent, and he was summoned before a medical committee and advised to avail himself of their recommendation for leave of absence. Proceeding to Calcutta, he presented himself to the authorities, who granted him two years furlough so that he might return to England. He left Calcutta in the s.s. Alma on the 18th May, 1858, arriving in this country on the 6th July, 1858, and reporting himself

at the "India House" on the 9th.

On the 31st of July he received a summons from the "Horse Guards" to attend at Portsmouth and report himself to Major-General Scarlett. Buckley obeyed and, on the 2nd of August, 1858, in the presence of the whole of the garrison of Portsmouth, paraded on South-sea Common, John Buckley, of Stalybridge, together with a number of other brave warriors, received from the hands of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the highest honour and the most cherished reward a British soldier can have pinned upon his breast—the Victoria Cross.

Lieutenant Buckley came home to Stalybridge in September, 1858, and although he had many friends, he was unable to settle and ultimately returned to India, where it is supposed he died.

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## Chapter 2.

### OUR LOCAL BENEFACTORS.

John Cheetham, Esq. — John Leech, Esq. — Mr. and Mrs.  
Robert Platt—Ralph Bates, Esq.

"When a man dies they who survive ask what property he has left behind.  
The Angel who bends over the dying man asks what  
deed he has sent before him."

*The Koran.*

### JOHN CHEETHAM, ESQ.

"The mind's the standard of the man."

*Watts.*

**J**OHN CHEETHAM was the third son of George Cheetham, Esq., Cotton Master, of Stalybridge, and was born at his father's house in Rassbottom Street

on the 23rd June, 1802. He was educated at the Moravian School at Fairfield, near Manchester. In his youth he was connected with Cocker Hill Chapel and Sunday School as a scholar and teacher. On attaining his majority he was admitted a member of the firm of "George Cheetham and Sons."

A prominent feature in his composition was his especial fondness for associating himself with any movement which had for its object the betterment and mental elevation of his fellow men. He became connected with the Albion Chapel at Ashton-under-Lyne, and for a term taught a large class of adult scholars in the Sunday School, and later he identified himself with the Melbourne Street Chapel in this town.

A keen interest in the social well-being of the working classes stimulated to activity the characteristics for which he afterwards became noted as a colleague of Sir Benjamin Heywood, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, and gentlemen of similar stamp. Always in the forefront whenever and wherever the question of educational benefit to the masses was concerned, Mr. Cheetham, together with Messrs. Robert Platt, John Leech, Samuel Robinson, Henry Johnson, and others, established "British Schools" in Stalybridge and Dukinfield.

In the early days of the Dukinfield Village Library, Mr. Cheetham's influence and sympathy did much to put that institution on a permanent and solid basis.

The time came when the political arena claimed his services, and for many years John Cheetham shared the public platform with such distinguished celebrities

as Richard Cobden, John Bright, George Wilson, C. P. Villiers, and other exponents of the principles and programme of the Anti-Corn Law League. As a public speaker few men were more welcome to the toiling masses than Mr. Cheetham. It is not claimed for him that he was gifted as an orator, but there was a distinct charm and a true homeliness in his method of delivery which appealed to the public; whilst the plain Lancashire way in which he put forth his thoughts and ideas had always its effect and reward.

Mr. Cheetham had a fund of sensible anecdotes at his command, which stood him in good stead, whilst the originality of his platform method soon secured for him the notice of the party leaders, who forthwith marked him as a suitable man to become a candidate for the House of Commons.

In the year 1847, when about 45 years of age, Mr. Cheetham contested Huddersfield, but was unsuccessful. The year 1852 saw his unopposed return to Parliament as one of the members for South Lancashire, his colleague being Sir William Brown.

South Lancashire at that period meant a district embracing the chief centres, including Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Wigan, Bolton, etc., and was recognised as one of the most important constituencies in the Kingdom.

In the year 1857, Sir William Brown and Mr. Cheetham were again returned unopposed.

At the general election of 1859, Mr. Cheetham was defeated, and again in 1861 he was unsuccessful.

At this period the following reference was made to our townsman :—“ He has long been recognised as one of our foremost men, whose name has always been connected with every great public object, not merely as a supporter, but as an intelligent and influential advocate. His services to commerce, both in and out of Parliament, have been numerous and valuable. So far as acquaintance with the forms of business and an unsullied party reputation may carry a man, the balance is strongly in favour of John Cheetham.”

After a lapse of three years, the election of 1864 gave Mr. Cheetham the opportunity to re-enter the political field, and he was returned unopposed as the member for Salford. In July, 1865, he was re-elected, but when the Borough of Salford was given a second member of Parliament, in 1868, Mr. Cheetham was defeated.

His personal political platform was of the widest possible range. He recognised the rights of all men and all classes to civil and religious freedom in the fullest sense of the term. His business capacities were exceptional and practical.

Mr. Cheetham in his early years was a member of a select Literary Society, which included Mr. Hampson, Steward of the Dukinfield Estate, the Rev. William Gaskell, Mr. Samuel Robinson, Mr. David Cheetham, and others. It was their custom to meet at stated periods at each others houses, where they read poems, essays, etc., which afterwards appeared in book form under the title of “Noctes Dukinfeldianae.” For several years Mr. Cheetham was President of the Cotton

Supply Association, for his services in connection with which he was honoured by King Victor Emmanuel II of Italy, who conferred upon our townsman the high distinction of "Cavaliere of The Order of S.S. Maurizio and Lazzario." The historic document in connection therewith is a treasured relic at Eastwood.

As a director of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce for a period of thirty years, extending from 1850 to 1880, he did much important work, and was vice-president of that body for the three years ending 1877.

Mr. Cheetham had large financial interests in the iron works known as Bolckow, Vaughan and Co., of Middlesborough, and also in the iron and steel works of John Brown and Co., Sheffield, being on the directorate of both companies. One of the original directors of the Stalybridge Gas Co., he was also one of the first directors of the Manchester and Liverpool District Bank.

There was scarcely any organisation in the district which had for its object the elevation and welfare of the people, which did not benefit by his generosity and sympathy. As a magistrate for the sister counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, and as a Deputy-Lieutenant for the former, Mr. Cheetham did excellent service, as the following from Mr. R. Arthur Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," will testify, the reference being in connection with the Bread Riots at Stalybridge in 1863:—"Mr. Cheetham at Stalybridge had exercised an influence as strong as that of a troop of horse."

John Cheetham, Esq. married in 1831 Emma, the daughter of Thomas Reyner, Esq., of Ashton-under-Lyne.

Fond of travel, Mr. Cheetham often visited the Continent, Switzerland and Italy being his favourite resorts.

Arrived at the advanced age of 84 years, he passed calmly away at his seaside residence, Southport, on the 17th May, 1886, whence his remains were brought to Dukinfield Cemetery, and there interred.

A memorable tribute to his worth, and a proof of the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries, came in the form of a letter to his son, J. F. Cheetham, Esq., from one of the greatest and grandest of Lancastrians, the late Rt. Hon. John Bright, who wrote as follows:—"Had I been nearer to your residence it would have been a duty for me to have been present at the funeral on Monday. I should have had satisfaction in showing respect to the memory of one whose useful and honourable life I had the privilege of observing through so many years, and whose friendship I have had the privilege of enjoying."

Although we cannot claim for our locality the honour of its having given birth to men of hereditary title and rank, yet we may feel with pride, and proclaim with truth, that this dear old smoky vale of ours has in times past been the cradle, the home, and the training ground of some of God's true nobility.

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JOHN LEECH, ESQ.

"Facts are chiels that winna' ding,  
An' downa' be disputed."

*Robert Burns.*

John Leech was the son of John Leech, Cotton Master, of Stalybridge, and was born on the 20th

October, 1802. He married on the 6th June, 1832, Jane, daughter of Thomas Ashton, Esq., Cotton Manufacturer, Hyde, Cheshire, and had issue three sons and five daughters. His sons were John, his heir; Ashton, who died in infancy; and William.

There is little record of the early days of John Leech, but it may be assumed that he received a thorough training under the vigilant eye of his father, the effect of which made itself apparent in his after career, a career as a manufacturer and merchant which stands out to-day far above that of any of his contemporaries.

It was the privilege of the author to be closely connected with the individual who acted as clerk and time-keeper during the erection of the famous seven storey mill in Grosvenor Street, which was never intended to be more than five storeys high, the foundations being put in to carry that class of structure. When the fifth storey had been completed, Mr. Leech gave orders for another to be added, and when that had been done, still another. The local manufacturers were astonished, and one of them asked Mr. Leech why he had added the two extra rooms, to which he immediately replied: "There's no ground rent to pay up there."

The ancient grave stone, bearing the family crest and coat-of-arms of the Leeches—one of the curiosities of Lancashire—owes its preservation to John Leech, Esq. When the footpath through the churchyard of St. Michael, Ashton-under-Lyne, was diverted many years ago, it was found that the pedestrians walked directly over the ancient memorial. Mr. Leech had the stone



taken up and fixed by means of iron cramps in its present position, behind the office of Messrs. Bromley and Hyde, Solicitors, Ashton-unde -Lyne.

At the time of his father's decease (November 21st, 1822), John Leech would be a very young man, and in 1825 we find that an addition had been made to the title of the firm, which was then known as "Leech and Vaudrey." How long the firm retained that title we have not been able to ascertain, but upon reference to the "Directory," of 1848, we find the name of the concern is once more "John Leech."

The now widely-known and successful manufacturer bought the lands known to-day as the Gorse Hall Estate, whereon he erected the commodious mansion, "Gorse Hall."

The hereditary traits of the founder of the firm developed themselves in the son, who, endowed with exceptional energy and business capacity, followed closely in the footsteps of his sire, and, with tact, judgment and foresight, built up a reputation which made the firm second to none in the mercantile arena.

In an age of slow development he saw the future advantages that would result from the organising and opening up of a regular trade in cotton goods with the distant East. The dilatory and irregular system then in vogue amongst the ordinary carriers by sea was far too slow for John Leech. He saw the necessity for being independent, and his shrewd, self-reliant perception conceived an idea at once daring and speculative. Without delay his project was given shape, and the

establishment of a shipbuilding yard at Bideford, Devonshire, followed.

A fleet of specially designed sea-going vessels was constructed for the purpose of conveying with speed and safety the manufactured goods to distant climes, from whence in return they brought back cargoes of cotton, tea, and other marketable products. This private fleet of sailing vessels plied regularly between this country and the "East Indies," and it may be interesting to know that several of the original models of these ships still exist. The venture was successful, and an extension of the mills at Stalybridge followed, to the benefit of the town and its people.

Two of John Leech's ships have been traced, the particulars of which are as under :—“The Shuttle,” 365 tons, built at Bideford. Master, Cuthbertson. Sailed from Liverpool. Ports: Bideford, Liverpool, and London, and the “Jane Leech,” 871 tons. Master, J. Downard. Built at Bideford, 1854. Sailed from Liverpool. Between London and India.”

John Leech is well remembered by many of the older residents, some of whom declare that in their day and generation he was known as “Ready-money Jack.”

In his manner he was practical, unassuming, and blunt; in appearance, homely and smart. Active in movement, sharp in speech, with a clean-shaven face, sparkling eyes and a mass of dark curly hair, he had “Business” written on his personal appearance. In height he stood about five feet six inches, in build being what is locally known as “thick-set.” This

wonderful man was spoken of with pride by his contemporaries, as "the cutest man on the Manchester Royal Exchange," and he undoubtedly created the largest mercantile business ever known in this district.

John Leech died at his residence, Gorse Hall, on the 23rd of April, 1861, at the age of 60 years, whence a few days later his body was borne to the family tomb at Dukinfield.

John Leech, son of John Leech, Esq., of Gorse Hall, was born August 5th, 1835. He is well remembered as "Young John Leech." In 1860 he married Eliza, daughter of Henry Ashworth, Esq., of "The Oaks," Bolton-le-Moors, and had issue one daughter and two sons, viz. : Ethel, who married the Rev. Sir William Hyde-Parker, tenth Baronet, of Melford Hall, Suffolk ; John Henry, his heir ; and Stephen, who now occupies a high post in the Diplomatic Service. John Leech, junior, died on the 29th October, 1870, and was interred at Gee Cross Chapel, Hyde.

John Henry Leech, of Kippure Park, Co. Wicklow, Ireland, F.R.G.S., F.L.S., F.Z.S., son of John Leech, junior, died 29th December, 1900. A valuable collection of entomological specimens which he had formed has been presented to the nation, and is now in the British Museum, London.

William Leech, son of John Leech, senior, of Gorse Hall, was born 24th August, 1836, and was married 4th March, 1873, to Rosalie, the daughter of Sir Richard Ansdell, R.A., of Moy, Inverness. William Leech is well remembered by the older inhabitants of Stalybridge.

He died on the 8th March, 1887, and his remains rest in the burial ground at Woking.

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ROBERT PLATT, ESQ., J.P. AND MRS. PLATT.

“Drying up a single tear has more of honest fame than  
shedding seas of gore.”

*Lord Byron.*

Robert Platt was the son of George and Sarah Platt, and was born at Stalybridge on the 11th November, 1802. His childhood was spent in the village, but his boyhood and youth were passed in the vicinity of Chester, in which city he was educated and trained for a commercial career.

In early manhood he was installed as his father's confidential clerk and manager at the Bridge Street Mill. and being practical, shrewd and thrifty, it was soon apparent to George Platt that the future of the business would be quite safe in the hands of his son Robert.

On the death of Mr. Platt, senr., in 1831, the concern appears to have passed into the hands of Robert Platt, and it was not long ere the new master launched out and extended the business. Quarry Street Mills were erected, and extensive alterations and additions were made at the Bridge Street Mills. The famous “G. P.” yarn found ready markets, and as a spinner of “fine counts” Robert Platt, of Stalybridge, became widely known in the textile world. Practical in the mill, keen as a business man on 'Change, he appears to have devoted his whole energy to the supervision of his thriving and remunerative concern.

Mr. Platt had reached middle life ere he found the lady of his choice, in the person of Miss Higgins, the eldest daughter of William Higgins, Esq., Machinist, of Salford: they were married at the "Old Church," Manchester, on the 11th September, 1839. Mr. Platt was then about 37 years of age, whilst his bride was in her 21st year.

Mr. and Mrs. Platt resided for many years in the house adjoining the Bridge Street Mill, but on the acquisition of the "Woodlands," in conjunction with Albion Mills, that residence became their home. In the year 1857 the demolition of the old home was necessary, the site being needed for the addition of the new end extension, but Mr. Platt's house is still remembered well by many old residents.

In December of 1857, the workpeople of Mr. and Mrs. Platt desired to show their respect and gratitude to their employers, and a tea party and presentation took place at the Foresters' Hall. The gifts were in the form of an address, and a walking stick to the master, and a silver inkstand for the mistress. In his reply, and whilst thanking his workpeople for their tributes, Mr. Platt made use of the following words:—"Whenever it shall please God to call me to my fathers, I hope in some way to speak to you, and do you good, even from the grave. I will take care that after I am gone you shall have some token of sympathy and of my regard, which will secure for you some gratification and some relaxation from your daily life of labour."

Although a keen, practical man of business, he had,

unlike the majority of his contemporaries, great taste and refinement, and was a noble patron of the fine arts. His judgment was shown in his acquisition of a collection of oil paintings, water colour drawings, and literary treasures, such as will, in all probability, never again exist in this district.

The desire to encourage and elevate the tastes of the working classes was evinced in the substantial sympathy given by Mr. Platt to the "Mechanics' Institution," at which place he introduced many eminent lecturers and scientific celebrities, whose names are now famous in the annals of research.

As a Churchman, his purse and influence were ever at the service of any movement which had for its object the spiritual welfare and benefit of his fellow worshippers. At various periods Mr. Platt paid the whole of the stipends of the Curates at St. Paul's, Stayley, and St. John's, Dukinfield.

The early years spent in the ancient City of Chester left an impression which bore fruit in later times, when the ineffaceable memories, and a spirit of gratitude for the mental benefits received, prompted our townsman to make magnificent and princely bequests to the venerable Cathedral.

The records of Owens College, now the Victoria University, reveal Mr. Platt's interest in the furtherance of the welfare of its students, and it is perfectly in order that the excellent portrait of our subject adorns to-day the walls of that institution.

The munificent gift to this town of "The Public

Baths" is the best known, and will keep the memory of our benefactor unfaded, whilst the subsequent additions, improvements, and endowment are acts of further benevolence which speak for themselves. The Foundation Stone of this institution was laid on the 24th October, 1868, and the opening ceremony took place on the 7th May, 1870.

The visitor to the Baths will notice in the entrance hall a pair of finely executed marble busts of Mr. and Mrs. Platt. Truly works of art, they are the productions of a Lancashire sculptor, John Warrington, Esq., who at the time he received the commission for the work was studying under a famous Italian master at Rome, where the work was completed.

The cost of the memorials was about £200, the money being subscribed in sums varying from £10 to 2s. The idea was so popular, that in a very short space of time more than the requisite sum was in the treasurer's hands. On their arrival at Stalybridge the busts were placed in their present position, and on the afternoon of Monday, the 6th February, 1871, they were unveiled in a quiet and appropriate manner. The artist was not present, but was represented by his father, who thanked the ladies and gentlemen assembled for their appreciation of his son's work.

A pleasing feature in Mr. Platt's composition was his tendency, when speaking in public, to refer to his early days, and their memories in connection with Stalybridge. These reminiscences are most valuable to-day, forming important and reliable links in the chain of past events,

by which the searcher is enabled to connect the scattered fragments of local history for future use. The writer has had occasion to quote freely from Mr. Platt's public speeches.

It may not be generally known that a large plot of land was purchased from the Dukinfield Estate, in the vicinity of Early Bank Wood, it being the intention of our benefactor to make a public park. Plans were prepared by a local surveyor and designs submitted, but through some unexplained cause the idea was abandoned, and the land again became the property of the "Estate."

In addition to the "Woodlands," Mr. and Mrs. Platt resided for some time at Dean Water, near Handforth, where it was their custom to entertain their workpeople annually. "Plas Llanfair, Anglesea," and "The Friars, Beaumaris," were also selected as residences, and finally Dunham Hall, Cheshire, became their home.

Age, with its increasing infirmities, is no respecter of persons, and at the venerable age of nearly four score years, Mr. Platt began to show proofs of decline. His last illness was of only a few days duration. A love for music, which was hereditary in the family, had enticed him to attend a grand festival at Chester. Whilst in that city on Friday, the 9th of June, 1882, he began to feel "out of sorts," and returned to Dunham, where he gradually became worse and died on Tuesday, June 13th, 1882, his last moments on earth being spent in peaceful slumber. His remains were brought to his native town and interred at St. Paul's Church, Stayley.



Mrs. Platt returned to the "Woodlands," where she resided for the rest of her life.

As a proof of the feeling which existed between Mr. and Mrs. Platt and their workpeople, it is thought fit to embody in these memorials the following quotations :

The first, an extract from a speech delivered to his employees by Mr. Platt, in December, 1857, runs thus : — "The little kindnesses and pleasures, which, you are pleased to say, we have given you from time to time, have been given with the greatest satisfaction to my wife and to myself, and we are very happy that you have been gratified by them." Referring to Mrs. Platt, he continued : "In her you have always had a warm friend, ever desirous to promote your good and happiness. . . . . The Address which you have so kindly presented to me will also be a pleasing object to contemplate. It will remind me of many pleasant things that have passed between you and me. . . . . In the probable course of nature my wife will outlive me, and as she will in one way or other have a considerable interest along with my successors in the business in which I am now engaged, I am sure she will carry out faithfully all my wishes as regards your best interests and welfare, and, I again repeat, that you will always find in her the kindest sympathy and friendship ; and I may venture to say, further, that when she goes to her last resting place, the words of the poet will be truly her epitaph, that, "Goodness and she fill up one monument."

In a letter addressed to the committee representing the workpeople on the foregoing occasion, Mrs. Platt

wrote :—“ Although I am sure, my friends, you require no words from me to express the deep sense of gratitude which I entertain of your kindness, I yet feel that I cannot allow the manifestation of it to pass without some acknowledgment. . . . Most gladly would I have given expression to my feelings upon the occasion of our most delightful meeting, but my emotion was too great for words. . . . I would also say that I look upon this beautiful present as a medium of conferring further honour and respect, through me, to my husband, and in this light it is doubly grateful to me. . . . Wishing you all every happiness for time and eternity,

I am

Your sincere friend,

MARGARET PLATT.

“ Woodlands,” December, 1857.

It is indeed no wonder that this high-souled lady should become known as “ The Queen of Kindness.”

Mrs. Platt survived her husband about six years, and died respected and lamented by the people of this district on the 11th August, 1888.

The extent of the munificence and generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Platt will never be fully known. The princely legacies to relatives, workpeople and local institutions are recorded, but many were the objects connected with the safety, happiness, and well-being of mankind which received substantial aid, of which we know little. By their actions they built for themselves

in the hearts of the people a memorial which remains bright and untarnished. Peace to their ashes. Love to their memory and rest to their souls.

“To live in the hearts of those they loved is not to die.”



### RALPH BATES, ESQ., J.P.

“First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.”

*General Lee.*

Few figures will be remembered better by the present generation than that of Ralph Bates, Esq. A man of exceptional personality, character, and determination, he is spoken of in terms of respect and reverence by the great majority of his fellow townsmen. For a period of over fifty years he was an active and valuable member of our local community, and his removal by the inevitable and certain hand of death left a gap in our midst which can never again be filled.

Ralph Bates was the son of John and Elizabeth Bates, and was born in Water Street, Stalybridge, on the 5th of February, 1831, his parents residing at the time in a cottage, now used as a shop, next to Mr. Barratt's, saddler. He was the only child, and was reared and schooled in the immediate vicinity of his birthplace, his education being obtained under the stern and practical Robert Smith, at Chapel Street School.

John Bates died on the 1st of September, 1851, his son having just completed his 20th year, and being under his father's guidance at the mill, the crisis was a

very serious one, but as he often said in his later years, "I had one of the best mothers in the world." Thus Ralph Bates was left to carve his own future, and this he did in such a fashion as to leave behind him a name which is worth more than riches.

In his early manhood a trait of musical ability, which was hereditary in the family, manifested itself, whilst as an athlete he vied with the many well-known sportsmen of his day. A spirit of mischief and daring often made itself apparent, and the numerous anecdotes which our townspeople are ever ready to relate may have much truth in them. His temperament was impulsive, and even abrupt, and it was a common thing for gentlemen, when discussing some knotty question, to observe: "We could do with Mr. Bates here now; he'd settle it." Whatever else may be said of his methods, he was always straight to the point.

He was very fond of travel and extremely interested in church architecture, having visited almost all the principal cathedrals and abbeys, not only of this country, but also on the Continent of Europe. The reader will find full proof of his interest and work in all the great questions of his day affecting his native town, in this volume, under the heading of the Volunteer Movement, Mechanics' Institution, Stamford Park, etc., etc.

During the dark days of the Cotton Panic, his energy was given to the Relief Committee, of which he was Secretary, and whilst he was endeavouring to do what he thought was best for his suffering fellow townspeople a deplorable shadow darkened the picture, and he lost

the best friend he had in the world—his mother.

For a period he disappeared from his native town and went abroad, visiting North America. His absence was felt, and his temporary retirement much regretted by his friends. In 1866 Mr. Bates married Miss E. J. Whittaker, the youngest daughter of Robert Whittaker, Esq., Cotton Master, of Hurst.

His connection with municipal affairs commenced when the first Town Council was formed in 1857, Mr. Bates being one of the original members. Shortly after his marriage, he again entered public life, and interested himself in local affairs; he became the leader of his political party, which he thoroughly re-organised and led for nearly 30 years, during which period and in which capacity he played "second fiddle to none." Twice (1871 to 1873) he was the Mayor of his native town, and entered with all that fire and energy which veritably formed part of his composition into all public functions connected with his office. A magistrate for Cheshire from 1869, and also for Lancashire from 1859, he was well known throughout the former county, whilst as a business man there was no better known figure on the Royal Exchange at Manchester. He was for many years a member of the Manchester and Saltersbrook Turnpike Trust, a visiting Justice of H.M. Prisons, a Commissioner for the assessment of Income Tax, a Governor of the District Infirmary, Mayor of the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, County Councillor of Cheshire 1888-1890, County Alderman from 1890 to 1894, Director of the original Stalybridge Gas Company, Trustee of the old Staly-

bridge Savings Bank, and a staunch and generous supporter of the Church of England. Many and difficult were the parts he played in our local annals, but in none was he ever a failure; he may have been impetuous, blunt, and hasty, but he had a kindly and tender heart, and, above all, a memory for old faces and connections which he never allowed to grow rusty.

During the researches made in connection with this memoir it has been a source of pleasure to unearth many unrecorded incidents of his large-heartedness which must be unknown, even to his own family, but which have had a great influence upon the feelings of the author.

Although a keen partisan, and one who would not stand at trifles where he had an object for the benefit of his side in view, whilst he was dreaded as a political adversary and attacked periodically most unmercifully by his opponents, he was nevertheless admired and sincerely respected by many who had known him from his youth, but who, as his old friend T. H. Sidebottom, Esq., once wrote, "had the misfortune to differ from him in politics." It is a pleasure for the author to record the fact that perhaps the keenest of all his opponents, when speaking of Mr. Bates in life, used the following quotation from "Punch":—

"We've hit him right oft,' and we've hit him right hard ;

But we never denied him the name of 'Trump Card.'"

In harness to the last, he was largely interested in

several of our local concerns, being chairman of the directorate of the Albion Mills at the time of his death.

Ralph Bates, Esq., J.P., died at his residence, Acres Bank, Stalybridge, on the 21st October, 1903, and at a Liberal meeting held on October 27th, a week after his death, a lengthy tribute was paid to his worth and memory by J. F. Cheetham, Esq., M.P., from which we quote as follows :—“ He (Mr. Bates) left behind him a memory which would ever be fresh and green in that community, and an example of noble devotion to the public service which younger men would do well to copy.”

A Freeman of his native town, the highest honour it could give him, his name is inscribed on the local roll of fame. But it is in the hearts of his fellow townsmen, who may not be able to testify in practical shape their silent admiration and respect, that his memory is most cherished.

From amongst the many gleanings relative to his career, the following is selected as typical of his method of sympathising with a fellow creature in the hour of need:—

On the 5th day of July, 1863, the second day after the battle of Gettysburg, U.S.A., a Federal soldier who had been busy with a party burying the dead, was walking across the battlefield at sunset when he came across an English gentleman who stood viewing the scene of carnage and bloodshed. The soldier, a native of Oldham, Lancashire, writing to his brother at home, uses these words in reference to the incident : “ He had come to this country on a visit, and he came to the battlefield. He said it was the hardest sight that he

had ever seen. I gave him your address, and he told me he would be sure and see you. I had a long interview with him. . . . He paid for my supper and gave me a dollar to buy some tobacco with, and it came in very useful. . . . His name is Mr. Bates, and he is a cotton spinner from Stalybridge."

"Death is the sleep that refreshes the tired workman for a new day," and although we know that all that was mortal of our distinguished townsman lies beneath a massive stone in St. Paul's Churchyard, Staley, we feel that his work, energy, and influence are bearing fruit to-day.

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### Chapter 3.

#### NOTABLE MEN OF THE DISTRICT.

George Cheetham, Esq.—John Leech, Esq.—John Lees, Esq.—Thomas Harrison, Esq.—Joseph Bayley, Esq.—Thomas Mason, Esq.—James Wilkinson, Esq.—David Harrison, Esq., J.P.—Abel Harrison, Esq., J.P.—William Bayley, Esq.—Henry Bayley, Esq.—Albert Hall, Esq., J.P.—Thomas Harrison, Esq., J.P.—Hugh Mason, Esq., J.P.—The Kenworthys and the Kinders—The Halls—The Mellors—The Orrells—The Wagstaffes—The Vaudreys—The Bates'—The Sidebottoms—The Ridgways—The Adsheads—The Ouseys.

"Whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together."

*Dean Swift.*

#### GEORGE CHEETHAM, ESQ.

**G**EORGE CHEETHAM, the founder of the local firm, "George Cheetham and Sons," was born about the year 1757. His father, John Cheetham, and



his grandfather, William Cheetham, were yeomen farmers in the vicinity of Newton Moor, where, according to a family tradition, "John Cheetham brought from Birmingham a strange piece of mechanism which excited the curiosity of his neighbours, and which the Squire of Dukinfield (Mr. Astley) turned out in his carriage and four to see." This machine was a primitive carding engine, and the date would be about 1784.

George Cheetham married Sarah Lees, the sister of John Lees, and appears to have come to Stalybridge about 1794-95, where, in conjunction with three other manufacturers there, was formed the firm known as "Lees, Leech, Harrison, and Cheetham." Their cotton mill was destroyed by fire in the year 1804, and a dissolution of partnership followed, each member of the defunct firm commencing business on his own account. George Cheetham selected the Cheshire side of the river as the site of his premises, known as Castle Mill (Caroline Street) and now in the occupation of Mr. Lewis Buckley and others. At that time the spot was a veritable "paradise," for record says: "Orchards of fruit trees and corn fields flourished, with here and there a farm."

The following account, somewhat quaintly worded, of George Cheetham, Esq., was written for a Presbyterian magazine which existed in this neighbourhood at the time of his death—*i.e.*, 1826:

"As Mr. Cheetham was denominated the eldest spinner in the trade, it necessarily follows that he had devoted a considerable period of his life to this business.

In the infancy of the cotton manufacture he made himself acquainted with every operation from which it derived its peculiar advantages.

“ All the improvements in machinery to which it owes so much of its success, by him were employed, inspected, and applied to their various purposes of convenience and utility.

“ Hence, he not only took the lead of the market he frequented, but for a considerable period, in high numbers, stood quite ahead of the trade. Notwithstanding this prominence, and exertions that, never abating, were rewarded with the greatest success, few individuals so circumstanced ever conciliated in a greater degree the regards of their workmen, or manifested less of that superiority of talent or station in society to which great wealth so readily lend their assistance. In manner he was retiring and unobtrusive; in conversation seldom taking that lead to which his powers were justly entitled, and always readier to attend to the remarks of others than forward to surrender his own. On all occasions when the interests or local advantage of the neighbourhood required it, Mr. Cheetham was a willing contributor. If assistance in money was required, his subscription was foremost; if advice or direction, his talents and his time were readily devoted to the public good. As a Trustee of the Turnpike Trust, he for a long time actively discharged the important and responsible duties of that situation. His disinterestedness, urgent in promoting improvement, had the entire approbation of those

with whom he acted, and it was quite a gratification to be associated with him in such undertakings.

“As a relaxation to other pursuits, he had for several years past paid much attention to an upland estate, which by draining and top-dressing with bone manure, of which he was a great advocate, had become uncommonly productive. Land that in point of fertility had little higher pretension than the adjoining common, by his management became one of the richest pastures in the district. This was an object that divided his latest attention, he having visited the farm not more than a week previous to his decease. In the architecture of the neighbourhood, namely, that of cotton factories and their appropriate appendages, his judgment and experience had a decided preponderance. A few years ago he took the direction of some important alterations in the enlargement of the chapel to which he belonged, and of which he had lived to become the father. The week previous to his sickness he gave directions for the construction of a family vault, unaware at the time that he would so soon become its tenant.”

Standing upon Water Street Bridge, and looking at the pile of buildings on the Cheshire side of the river, it is easy to perceive how Mr. Cheetham extended his mills as his trade increased. His speciality was the spinning of yarns for the manufacture of hosiery, and his goods found ready customers in the Nottingham markets. The Bankwood Mills were built for cotton spinning and weaving.

George Cheetham built the substantial house formerly

used as the Manchester and County Bank, at the corner of King Street and Market Street, at a period when nothing intervened between the site and the river's edge, save pasture land and foliage. The firm of George Cheetham and Sons consisted of the founder and his three sons, David, John, and George.

For the interest which Mr. Cheetham took in his upland farms and agriculture generally, he was the recipient of a silver cup, suitably inscribed, from Mr. Astley, of Dukinfield Lodge, and also gained a prize offered by a Manchester society established for the promotion and encouragement of farming.

George Cheetham died at his residence, Rassbottom Street, Stalybridge, on the 17th April, 1826, aged 69 years, and was interred at the Old Presbyterian Chapel, Dukinfield.

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### JOHN LEECH, ESQ.

The "Leechs," of Gorse Hall, belong to one of the oldest families in this district, and they claim descent from the Leechs of Chatsworth, in the County of Derbyshire. A section of the family migrated into this locality more than three centuries ago, and in support of this we find numerous memorials and proofs of their service and quality.

During the days of "The Cavaliers and Roundheads" the Leechs were well known in this district as physicians and yeomen. Their ancient crest and coat-of-arms is sculptured on the tombstones and memorials bearing

their names within the precincts of St. Michael's Churchyard, Ashton-under-Lyne.

One branch of the family, on the rise of the "Dissenters," appear to have attached themselves to the Old Chapel, Dukinfield, where they worshipped for a long period, and where the graves of the Leechs, of Gorse Hall, may be seen.

The founder of the firm of "John Leech" and one of the pioneers of the cotton industry in this district, our subject was the son of John Leech, of "The Croft," Dukinfield, and was born in 1755. In the year 1801 he married Elizabeth, daughter of John Turner, of Ashton-under-Lyne, and widow of Samuel Bates, by whom he had issue three children, viz. : John, his heir ; William, who died young ; and Elizabeth, born 1806, who afterwards became the wife of John Ashton, son of James Ashton, of Newton Moor.

About the year 1794-95 a number of men entered into partnership, and erected what we may presume was the first typical cotton mill in the Vale.

Shortly after the commencement of last century John Leech left this concern, and crossing to the Dukinfield side of the river, purchased land from Mr. Astley, and forthwith erected a mill for himself in close proximity to the canal, which had just been completed.

It is believed that he even made a great proportion of his own machinery, and it is well-known that he could card, spin, and weave, as indeed most of the pioneers could. The "Hand-loom" of "Th' owd Mestur" has

been often described to the writer by one who remembered it well.

At the period mentioned there existed very few cottages on the Cheshire side of the river, and as the concern grew and more hands were required, John Leech built a great number of houses for his workpeople. A long row of these dwellings lined the south side of Grosvenor Street, extending from Leech Street to Mr. Leech's own residence, which stood back some little distance from the road, and upon the site of which the large weaving shed is erected.

About the year 1818, Mr. Leech put down a gas-making plant for his own use, and also for the supply of gas to other mill owners.

He used the canal as a means of transit for his manufactured goods, which were loaded into the boats and transported to Manchester, Liverpool and elsewhere, and lived to see the business he had founded a flourishing concern, dying on the 21st November, 1822, at the age of 68 years.

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### JOHN LEES, ESQ.

John Lees, the founder of the firm of John Lees and Sons, was a native of Newton Moor, and was born about 1762. He married Ann Harrison, the sister of Thomas Harrison, and resided at the Old Castle Hall. A quaint description of his personal appearance says: "He resembled a village clergyman in manner and dress, and was very methodical and punctual in his habits. In his younger days he had

been noted as a pedestrian and athlete." John Lees died at Castle Hall, August 24th, 1824, aged 61 years, and was interred at Dukinfield Old Chapel. The following is a portion of a memoir which appeared in a magazine at the time of his death.

"Early in his life, in the very infancy of the cotton business, he (Mr. Lees) became a spinner, and with an ardour peculiar to his disposition and a strong discernment of what machinery rendered practicable, he was one of the foremost to avail himself of its advantages. He had the good fortune to connect himself with three other partners, all of whom became exceedingly successful in the trade, and to whom altogether the village of Stalybridge owes the establishment of its wealth and prosperity. Having married when young, the stimulus of an increasing family urged him to the nicest calculations in the economy of his time, and the regulations he introduced in this respect amongst a very numerous class of his workmen have been attended with the best effects, both to themselves and to their employers. As a master he was strict in discipline, requiring regular attention and uniform obedience to the orders he prescribed, but it ought not to be omitted that when Sir Robert Peel's Bill for limiting the hours of labour in cotton factories became law, it had nothing to redress for those under his control. With such a knowledge of his business, derived from its first principles enlarged by every new improvement with which that business had been connected, the accumulation of a large property ceases to be a matter of surprise. . . .

With a mind so constituted, and talents kept bright by action, and which continued so well, it will be naturally inferred that he was a valuable companion. His table was ever one of the most hospitable, and himself never so happy as in the company of his friends when he could get a company of them to surround him."

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### THOMAS HARRISON, ESQ.

Thomas Harrison was the son of William Harrison, of High Ash, Audenshaw, who was killed by an accident when driving. His sister, Ann Harrison, married John Lees, of Stalybridge. George Cheetham married a sister of John Lees, and Thomas Harrison married another sister. These three were the "Harrison, Lees and Cheetham" who, with John Leech commenced cotton manufacture at Stalybridge about the year 1796. The home of Thomas Harrison was situated almost in the centre of the village, the site being now occupied by the "King's Arms Inn." Mr. Harrison afterwards built Thompson Cross House, which was at that period one of the finest modern mansions in the district. The firm known as Thomas Harrison and Sons consisted of Mr. Harrison as the head, and his four sons, William, David, Abel, and Allen. Thomas Harrison died at Thompson Cross, September 6th, 1820, aged 68. William Harrison married his cousin Amy, the daughter of George Cheetham, and sister of John Cheetham, and built West Hill, Stalybridge, where he died November 10th, 1853, aged 64.

Thomas Harrison, William Harrison, David Harrison,



and Abel Harrison, are all interred at the Old Chapel, Dukinfield, where their tombs may be seen.

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JOSEPH BAYLEY, ESQ.

Joseph Bayley, the founder of the well-known local firm, was born about the year 1772. He was in partnership with others in the latter part of the eighteenth century, commencing business and erecting a mill of his own about 1804. He built the substantial residence known as "Hyde's House."

He is described as having been a finely built and handsome man, having the love of field sports strongly marked in his character. Noted as a daring horseman throughout the countryside, he was the companion of the famous Squire Astley of that day, and there are in existence accounts of his famous horse "Burgy," and the Squire's "General." There was at that time a favourite "jump" in the neighbourhood of Hollingworth Hall which would have scared the boldest riders of the present generation, but which was thought little of by Mr. Bayley and his friend. Like most of the pioneers in the cotton trade, Mr. Bayley was a practical man, and whilst superintending some work in his mill met with an accident which proved fatal in a very short time. He died on the 13th April, 1814, at the early age of 42. He left a widow and a family, his four sons being Abel, William, Henry, and Charles.

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THOMAS MASON, ESQ.

Thomas Mason, Esq., of Audenshaw Hall, one

of the largest cotton spinners of his time, was a native of Stalybridge, having been born in a cottage which stood at the corner of Spring Street and Rassbottom Street, about the year 1782. His father, Henry Mason, was a joiner, a native of Stoney Middleton, Derbyshire, who came to Stalybridge seeking employment at the time when the first St. George's Church was being erected. He was successful in obtaining work, and settled in the village, where he married, and in the course of time became the father of two children, a boy and a girl, the eldest of whom, Thomas Mason, is our subject. Henry Mason died in 1784, and was interred in the graveyard at Cocker Hill, where a stone indicates the exact spot. Thomas Mason was put to work in the cotton mill at the tender age of eight years, the hours of labour at that time being fourteen hours a day, and from little-piecer he graduated to card-room hand, hand-spinner, and overlooker. Mr. Mason married a widow named Mrs. Woolley, who at the time kept a grocer's shop in Rassbottom Street, and in the directory for 1818 we find the name of "Thomas Mason, shop-keeper." Shortly after this period, it is certain that Mr. Mason, in conjunction with John Booth and Edward Hilton commenced business on their own account at a mill in Currier Lane, which stood upon the site now covered by the Parish Church Mission School, and at which place Thomas Mason worked himself as carder, clerk and salesman. The firm at the time possessed "two or three pairs of jennies." A dissolution of the partnership took place, Messrs. Booth and Hilton

returning to Stalybridge, Mr. Mason going forward to Ashton, where he established the concern which has grown to such vast dimensions.

As a child, youth, and young man he was closely connected with the Chapel Street School, Stalybridge, and as a scholar, teacher and trustee his name is inscribed in the records of that institution. In his later years it was his custom, like many other of our local celebrities, to refer to his early days, and some of these utterances have been of great use. Speaking at a large gathering in the district, he dealt with the credit due to men who had risen from obscurity by their own merit, and in encouraging the young men present, he said:—  
“Why, the man who used to spin on the next jennies to me has become exceedingly wealthy; he has been the Mayor of Manchester, and occupied other positions of importance, and is now worth half a million of money.”  
Thomas Mason, Esq., died at his residence, Audenshaw Hall, on the 17th April, 1868, at the advanced age of 86 years. His remains were interred at St. Peter's Church, Ashton-under-Lyne, within sight of the bronze statue erected to his youngest son.

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### JAMES WILKINSON, ESQ.

James Wilkinson was born about the year 1790 at a small farmstead known as Honey Home, in the Parish of Cliviger, Lancashire, situated about three and a half miles from Burnley. He came to Stalybridge in the year 1803 as a youth, and settled in the village.

At this period there existed a firm of machinists known as "Hazeldine and Edge," whose workshop was located in "Owd Joe Heap's garret," really the top storey of the building now known as the "White House Hotel."

James Wilkinson is described at this time as a short, quaint, shrewd youth, known amongst his workmates and associates, as "the old man."

He obtained a situation with Messrs. Hazeldine and Edge, and graduated from apprentice to journeyman in their employ. Thrifty and saving, he was never slow to improve the opportunity of adding to his small income, and by the time he neared manhood's estate, it was known to at least one or two of his shopmates that "little Jimmy wurna beawt brass." There comes down to us the following story in connection with this period.

During the days of the Luddites, or Machine Breakers, about the year 1810-11, the local manufacturers began to be chary about ordering new machinery, and in consequence the machinists of those days who were not men of much capital, became sufferers, and in some cases were embarrassed. Amongst others, Messrs. Hazeldine and Edge felt the dire effects of the disturbed state of the district. It is said that as a result, when an eventful Saturday afternoon had arrived, the head of the firm went to a fitter in their employ and told him that "there would be no more need for his services after that day."

The fitter inquired the reason, and the master explained that in consequence of financial difficulties, caused by lack of trade, coupled with the demands of a voracious creditor, the firm was on the brink of ruin.

It is stated that he went to James Wilkinson, who found sufficient capital to tide over the difficulty, the firm being shortly afterwards known as "Hazeldine, Edge, and Wilkinson." In 1818 the name is given as Hazeldine and Wilkinson, and in 1825 the recorded title of the business is "James Wilkinson, Machinist, Water Street, Stalybridge." About the same period there existed a firm of cotton spinners trading as Wilkinson and Binns, Rassbottom, of which our subject was a partner. A few years later, Mr. Wilkinson removed his machinist's business to a building in Old Street, where he had the advantage of water power. Here he built up a reputation, and supplied a great proportion of the machinery for the mills in the town during the earlier half of the last century.

Eventually he decided to become a cotton manufacturer himself, and selected the hamlet afterwards known by the significant name of "Copley." According to "Butterworth," Mr. Wilkinson was building his mills in the year 1827.

James Wilkinson was a keen, practical, business man, with experience and tact, yet he found time to interest himself in the affairs of the thriving town. He was one of the early "Police Commissioners," and was appointed on the 3rd of October, 1831, as an honorary "Head Constable."

In his early days he was connected with St. George's Chapel, Cockerhill, where his first wife is interred.

His migration and settlement at Copley had much to do with the inception of the handsome Church of St.

Paul's, Stayley, of which he was a staunch supporter. Settled in his new mills at Copley, he eventually removed his mechanical plant from Old Street, and carried on the machine business in conjunction with cotton manufacture.

Although Mr. Wilkinson was always fond of this district, he never forgot the place that gave him birth, and it was his custom in his later years to re-visit the scenes of his boyhood, when he would spend a few days at the old home with his brother Thomas.

As a type of the men who, by perseverance and self-reliance carved their way from obscurity into prominence, James Wilkinson may be considered a worthy example.

Mr. Wilkinson died on the 3rd July, 1857, at the age of 67 years, and his remains were interred in the family vault at St. Paul's, Stayley.

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#### DAVID HARRISON, ESQ., D.L., J.P.

David Harrison was the son of Thomas Harrison, Esq., and was born at Newton Moor on the 24th April, 1791.

He was in the early days of the cotton industry a member of the firm of Thomas Harrison and Sons, manufacturers, Stalybridge. He attended as a youth a college at Audenshaw, at which institution he acquired a sound training and an education which fitted him for his future career. In the early days of the "Police Commissioners" he was always to the fore, often presiding at their meetings, and at one time occupying the honorary position of High-Constable of the town. He

was a magistrate for the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, and also for the West Riding of Yorkshire. As a Deputy-Lieutenant of Lancaster he also did service for the good and welfare of that county. A staunch supporter of the Mechanics' Institution in its early days, he assisted by means of his purse the inauguration of the present Institution, the foundation-stone of which he "well and truly laid" on the 17th August, 1863. During the Crimean War he interested himself in the welfare of the wives and families of the local soldiers on active service. He has been described as a typical English gentleman in the fullest meaning of the phrase. Fond of outdoor exercise, he dearly loved to ride behind a pack of hounds, across the green pastures of the district, whilst as a judge of horse-flesh few country gentlemen were better qualified than he. As a magistrate he tempered justice with mercy, and even to-day some of our patriarchs who through some misdemeanour had appeared before him in their youthful days, will speak with a tremor in their tones as they refer to "Mestur David."

Mr. Harrison was not prominent as a party leader. In religion he was a Unitarian. His success as a manufacturer had little effect upon his personality; he was straight and honest in all his dealings and decisions. His home was the house "Thompson Cross," which had been built by his father, and was one of the first modern mansions erected in the town. On the demolition of the old "Rassbottom Cross," Mr. Harrison had the circular base-stone removed into his stable-yard, where

it was hollowed out to form a drinking-trough for the horses. The stone is now in the Stamford Park, near the Ashton entrance. Mr. Harrison lived beyond the allotted span, and died lamented and mourned by all who knew him, on the 21st October, 1872, in his 82nd year. During the "Bread Riots" of 1863 he showed, for a man of his years, great energy, will, and pluck, taking upon himself the duty of reading the Riot Act in the presence of an angry and vengeful mob. The following tribute came from the lips of one who in his day had been antagonistic to Mr. Harrison on local questions, the Rev. J. R. Stephens, who said within a few hours of Mr. Harrison's decease :

"I hope I may even live as long as that fine old English gentleman who has gone to sleep to-day—the first dissenter who was appointed to the Lancashire magistracy after the year 1830, and, I believe, the truest and kindest of all the justices who ever sat upon this bench—God rest his soul."

The funeral was of a private nature, his remains being carried to their last resting-place in the crypt of the Old Chapel, Dukinfield.

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#### ABEL HARRISON, ESQ., J.P.

Abel Harrison was the third son of Thomas Harrison, of Thompson Cross House, the founder of the firm of Thomas Harrison and Sons, and was born on the 10th August, 1793.

Mr. Harrison was a practical man of business, and took an active part in the management of the mills.



He built the well-known mansion, once known as "Highfield House," the cost of which is recorded as having been upwards of £15,000. The building is now used as a museum, etc., the grounds which surrounded it being absorbed in what is known as Stamford Park.

As a man of business he had few, if any, superiors. A dissolution of the firm took place about the middle of last century, when Mr. Abel Harrison acquired the business of the Staley Mills, which came into the market through their relinquishment by Messrs. Howard and Ainsworth.

Although engaged in extensive manufactures, he was ever to the fore in all movements of importance concerning the welfare of his fellow townsmen. His upright and somewhat blunt manner, coupled with a straightforwardness now seldom seen, gained for him the esteem and goodwill of all who had dealings with him. A keen politician and partisan, he fought fair, gave no favours, and expected no quarter; thus he made a name for himself, and is still remembered as one of the staunchest men that ever lived in Stalybridge. On his retirement from the office of Police Commissioner in 1857 he received a framed testimonial in the form of an address, also a silver loving cup suitably inscribed. They were presented to Mr. Harrison by a committee representing a large and influential body of his fellow-townsmen, who felt that it was their duty to acknowledge and put upon record the kindly appreciation and regard they felt for the numerous services rendered on their behalf on various occasions. The address is dated

August 10th, 1857, and signed on behalf of the committee by the following:—John Kiddy, President; Thomas Hague, Treasurer; George Haigh Green, Secretary.

It was the common belief that Mr. Harrison suffered heavy financial loss in connection with the terrific struggle between the North and South in the United States. He attained a venerable age, and passed away at his residence, Highfield House, on June 3rd, 1865, his remains being conveyed to the family tomb at Dukinfield Old Chapel, at which place Mr. Harrison had been a life-long worshipper.

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#### WILLIAM BAYLEY, ESQ., J.P.

William Bayley was born at Hydes House, and was in his day one of the most notable men in this district. In physique he had few equals and no superiors. Leaving the original firm, he launched out and built the Clarence Mill, admitted at the time to be the finest and best fitted cotton-mill in England. In 1846 he purchased Stamford Lodge, where he made important improvements and where he spent the rest of his life. About the middle of the last century he assisted a scheme for a railway proposed to be constructed by the L. and N.W. Railway, from Stalybridge to Denton, which was planned to pass under St. John's Church, Dukinfield.

As a great friend of Sir Edward Watkin, he supported that gentleman at the time when it was expected Stalybridge would be enfranchised, the baronet being

a prospective candidate. The disastrous war in the United States played sad havoc with his business affairs, the result being that Mr. Bayley retired from public life about the year 1863. He played many important parts in the history of his native town, not the least important being that of the first Mayor, in the year 1857.

He died at Stamford Lodge on February 2nd, 1891, at the venerable age of 88, and was buried at Dukinfield Old Chapel.

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### HENRY BAYLEY, ESQ.

Henry Bayley was the third son of Joseph Bayley, cotton spinner, and after receiving a serviceable education was taken into the concern belonging to his mother, Mrs. Mary Bayley, known as Bridge Street Mill. At the decease of their mother, the eldest brother Abel having withdrawn, William, Henry, and Charles built the extensive mills long known as Bayley Street Mills (on a plot of land known as "The Stakes") which eventually came into Mr. Henry Bayley's possession.

As a young man our subject was known as an enthusiastic musician, and along with other gentlemen took a great interest in local musicians and their aspirations, being himself a player of quality; he took pleasure in arranging concerts at the Stalybridge Town Hall, and was a prime mover in the establishment of the "Gentlemen's Glee Club." He was instrumental in bringing several celebrated London actors to the district. In 1841 he was the president of the "Anti-

Monopoly League," a society which held frequent discussions with the "Chartists," at that time a numerous body, on the topics of the hour. He died at Kelsall House, Stalybridge, with tragic suddenness, on the 19th November, 1875, aged 71 years.

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### ALBERT HALL, ESQ., J.P.

The name of Hall is connected with the woollen and cotton industries of Stalybridge as far back as the records go. Albert Hall was the son of James Hall, of Cocker Hill, and was born near the Old Spread Eagle Inn, in the year 1804. He was educated at Whitley Hall, a private college near Sheffield, and entered the cotton business of his father at King Street Mills. Albert Hall is remembered amongst connoisseurs by reason of his reputation as a judge and critic of paintings, drawings, and other works of art, of which he at one period possessed some of the choicest examples in the North of England. His collection included specimens of the work of all the great masters of the English School, and his advice and judgment, which he was ever ready to give, were always considered reliable. During the time when Stalybridge was noted for its patrons of art, there existed several collections of oil paintings and water-colour drawings in the town, one of which alone was valued at £40,000, but it was admitted that the choicest gems were in the possession of Albert Hall, Esq., and his opinion was often sought by his brother manufacturers ere they made an important purchase. It has been said that Mr. Hall

himself was an artist; he was certainly a keen sportsman.

Albert Hall, Esq., died at East View, Old Mottram Road, on the 31st December, 1885, at the advanced age of 82, and is interred at Old St. George's Church.

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THOMAS HARRISON, ESQ., J.P.

Thomas Harrison was born at West Hill, Stalybridge, on the 30th October, 1823, and was the elder son of William Harrison, cotton manufacturer. He was educated at St. Domingo House, Liverpool, and Shrewsbury School. He was a Fellow-Commoner of St. John's College, Cambridge, 1845; took B.A. degree, 1847, and M.A. degree, 1851, and was called to the Bar, 1849; J.P. for the counties of Lancaster and Chester from 1847; barrister-at-law of the Middle Temple, practised on Northern Circuit, York. Mr. Harrison was connected with municipal work for many years, being Mayor from November 1876 to 1880. His tastes were varied—yachting, astronomy, bibliography, and higher mathematics. His magisterial work included the offices of member of the County Rating Committee, visiting Justice of Prisons, etc., and Income Tax Commissioner. As an earnest Churchman he was much interested in St. Paul's, Stayley, of which he was a firm supporter. Mr. Harrison died at Llandudno, August 12th, 1888, and was interred at St. Paul's Church, Stayley

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HUGH MASON, ESQ., D.L., J.P.

Hugh Mason was the third son of Thomas Mason,

of Stalybridge, and was born at his father's residence in Rassbottom Street, Stalybridge, on the 30th January, 1817. The Mason family migrated to Ashton-under-Lyne, and have since been closely identified with that town. Hugh Mason as a youth was placed in one of the local banks, where he remained until he attained his majority, after which time he entered the manufacturing business of his father. He became prominent as a public man, and filled many important positions, including those of Mayor and member of Parliament for Ashton-under-Lyne. A glimpse of his early days in Stalybridge is given in a speech made by Mr. Mason at Chapel Street School, on the 25th April, 1868, from which we quote:—"His thoughts went back to the days of his childhood spent in the old school where he first learned his A.B.C. . . . He recollected one Sunday, going home—to a little shop where his mother sold tape and gingerbread—and telling his father and mother in great glee that he had learned to spell."

A platform critic once asked "when Mr. Mason had matriculated, what University or College did he belong to?" The reply was: "The Universal College, his principal degree having been earned in the academy of practical experience." Hugh Mason, Esq., holds the unique position of being the only Stalybridge-born man to whose honour a bronze statue has been erected. Mr. Mason died on the 2nd February, 1886, aged 69 years, and was interred at the Dukinfield Cemetery, where a mausoleum is erected.

## THE KENWORTHYS AND THE KINDERS.

Two notable Staley-wood families are the Kenworthys and the Kinders, whose direct descendants are amongst our prominent townsmen to-day.

Since the reign of Henry VIII. the Kenworthys are found connected with "The Ashes," where Richard Kenworthy resided about 1600; his son Thomas Kenworthy, born there in 1607, died in 1667, and was buried at Mottram. John Kenworthy, the next heir, son of Thomas Kenworthy, married Elizabeth Foden, who survived him, and, it is assumed, built the house known to us as "The Ashes," to which she transferred the name from the "Old Ashes," which was afterwards, and is still known as Kinder Fold. Over the main entrance to "The Ashes" is an inscribed stone bearing initials and date, thus: F.K.—T.K., 1712; which are understood to mean Foden Kenworthy and Thomas Kenworthy, the eldest son of Thomas Kenworthy, who died in 1710. Widow Kenworthy, née Foden, appears to have built this house as a home for herself and family, two years after her husband's death. On the 10th February, 1701, Lydia Shepley, grand-daughter of Thomas Kenworthy (1607-1667), married Hugh Kinder, and it is assumed that he and his family succeeded the Kenworthys at the old dwelling, which became known as Kinder Fold. A document bearing the date 21st July, 1767, being an indenture between the then Countess of Stamford and Mary Kenworthy, and inscribed with the additional names of Hugh Kinder and William Hope, gives the following particulars

respecting the "Ashes" estate at that period, when it apparently embraced the following plots of land, viz. :— "The Bank-meadow; the Croft; the Well-bank; the Slate-croft; the Lime-croft; the Foxhill; the Cote-meadow; the Path; the Broad-field; the Four-acre; the Further Four-acre; the Marled-earth; and the Wood: containing by common estimation, thirty acres of land of the large Cheshire measure."

The Kenworthys intermarried with the Shepleys, Kinders, Boyers or Bowers, and the Mellors, all of whom were amongst the pioneers of the woollen manufacture in Stayley, several of them keeping their own flocks of sheep, from whose backs they sheared the fleece, and transformed it into cloth on their own premises. One member of the family, Samuel Kinder, was a manufacturer and clothier at Hyde Green, near Harridge, and it was with him that Lawrence Earnshaw, of Mottram, "was first apprenticed to the business of clothier" (Butterworth, p. 201; 1827), being afterwards engaged as a clock-maker by a Mr. Shepley, of Stockport, presumably a kinsman of the Kinders of Staley-wood.

The Kenworthys appear to have been interested in the Old Bridgewater Navigation Company, during its infancy, the original value of whose shares was £70 each, but which in 1843 were all bought up at £800 per share by the Duke of Bridgewater.

There have been several prolonged litigations in connection with the Kenworthys and the Kinders of "The Ashes," the most important lasting from 1844 until 1852: the issue at stake being estimated at that time



as £98,832 11s. 6d. Towards the costs of procuring information in support of the claim to the above sum, the Kinder family alone subscribed the amount of £2,000. The case was never settled.

### THE "HALLS."

Amongst the early manufacturers of the valley there were several branches of the "Halls."

The "Halls" of Cocker Hill may be traced as follows: Joseph Hall, born about 1726, was, at the end of 1799, described as a "cloth-miller." His remains were interred in Cocker Hill Church-yard, where the inscription, "Joseph Hall, cloth-miller, died December 9, 1799, aged 73," may be seen.

His son and successor was James Hall, who was born about 1762, and established a business as "cotton-spinner of fine counts in the vicinity of the old Eagle Inn." Very early in the last century he appears to have migrated to Bowling Green Mills, King Street, where he built the house now occupied by Mr. Horace Stokes. Mr. Hall was a practical man, and whilst engaged in the carding department of his mill, he accidentally got his arm into the machinery, the effect of which was that the limb had to be amputated. After this misfortune, Mr. Hall was known amongst the operatives as "Owd Nelson." James Hall, cotton spinner, died May 24th, 1848, aged 76.

### THE BAYLEYS.

The Bayleys came from Hooley Hill, Audenshaw, where, about the middle of the 18th century,

Joseph Bayley was a yeoman farmer. He married the widow of William Harrison (née Sarah Stopford, of High Ash, Audenshaw) and was the father of Joseph, James, John, and William Bayley, who were half-brothers to Thomas Harrison, of Thompson Cross, and Mrs. John Lees, of Castle Hall, Stalybridge.

Joseph Bayley, of Hooley Hill, had occasion to visit Manchester during the time when the "King's Service" required able-bodied men, and being a very fine and powerful man, he is supposed to have been taken by the press-gang, as he disappeared, and was never heard of again (1793). His sons came to Stalybridge, where they settled, and entered the cotton trade. Joseph Bayley, junior, built Bridge Street Mill and Hydes House. James Bayley married Jane, the eldest daughter of George Cheetham, and built Albion Mills, also Albion House. He had a large family, one of whom, Charles Cheetham Bayley, succeeded his father in the business, and built the mansion known as The Woodlands, whilst Miss Ellen Bayley married Frederick Reyner, and Miss Sarah Bayley married John Newton of Fox Hill.

The Bayleys were remarkable for their business capacities and exceptionally fine physique, also for their love of all field sports.

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### THE MELLORS.

The name of Mellor is amongst the early pioneers of our local industry. They are said to have built the King Street Mills, and the names of the well-

known "Mellor Brow," and also of the once-famed spring well, "Mellor's Drop," are significant. The building now known as the "Talbot Inn" is said to have been the home of the Mellors, and it is quite certain that the well-known firm of cotton manufacturers in Ashton-under-Lyne were of Stalybridge origin. Several members of the family are interred in the confines of Cocker Hill Churchyard. Thomas Mellor, the founder of the firm of Thomas Mellor and Sons, married Mary, the daughter of Thomas Walton, of Stalybridge, and we are very proud to know that the family of which Thomas Walton Mellor, Esq., was the head originated on both sides from Stalybridge. The Waltons were at one time well-known business people, and are still vividly remembered by the older inhabitants as typical English gentlemen.

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#### THE ORRELLS.

John Orrell, the founder of "Orrell's Mills," afterwards known as "Kirk's," in Water Street, was born in the early half of the eighteenth century, and built one of the earliest of our typical cotton factories. It was at Orrell's mill that Thomas Mason commenced work, and reached the position of overlooker at 26s. per week. John Orrell died January 30th, 1800. His son and successor, Thomas Orrell, was born about the year 1778, and built for himself the residence known as Hob Hill House, which stood in its own grounds. Thomas Orrell was known as a successful cotton manufacturer for many years. He died 3rd

January, 1853, aged 75 years, and was interred in the family vault at Old St. George's

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### THE WAGSTAFFES.

Luke Wagstaffe, the founder of the family in this town, was a native of Mottram, and a blacksmith by occupation. He settled in Stalybridge about 1790, and in addition to the usual work of the village smith and farrier, began to make spindles for the local cotton-spinners. The writer remembers seeing the delivery book of Luke Wagstaffe, in which were entered the dates when he supplied the various manufacturers—Messrs. Lees, Harrison, Cheetham, Leech and others—with “steel spindles” of various lengths and thicknesses, in quantities of “1 dozen” and “2 dozen” at a time. John Wagstaffe, the son of the spindle-maker, married Hannah Sidebottom, sister to William Sidebottom, whilst his son, James Wagstaffe, married a Miss Robinson, and in conjunction with his cousin, Edward Sidebottom, commenced business at Cock-Brook factory, where they built up a trade which encouraged them to launch out and build Aqueduct Mills, and there they became successful manufacturers under the title of Wagstaffe and Sidebottom.

John Wagstaffe died on the 1st February, 1855, aged 78 years. James Wagstaffe met his death through a trap accident whilst returning from a shooting expedition to Saddleworth, and after lingering some time he died 5th June, 1837, aged 34 years.

Two very fine portraits of Mr. and Mrs. James Wag-

staffe were hung in the staircase during the Jubilee Exhibition. They were painted in 1829 by T. H. Illidge, R.A., who was subsequently commissioned to paint the portrait of Lord Stanley (afterwards Earl of Derby) which now hangs in the Langworthy Gallery, Peel Park, Salford. This is another instance of the taste and patronage of our successful townsmen in bygone times.

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### THE VAUDREYS.

The Vaudrey family appears to be of Cheshire origin. The name is in the list of North-East Cheshire cotton manufacturers in the eighteenth century.

A branch of the family lived in this district nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, as proved by documents in the possession of the family. Thomas Vaudrey was born about the year 1756, and was connected with the Grosvenor Street Mills. He built the residence occupied by Dr. McCarthy, which is still known as Vaudrey House.

Thomas Vaudrey had two sons, Edward and John Vaudrey, who were prominent men in the town during the early part of last century. It appears that at one period the Vaudreys were interested in the Grosvenor Street Mills, the firm being known as Leech and Vaudrey. Thomas Vaudrey died 6th July, 1838, aged 82. Edward Vaudrey died 21st December, 1840, aged 54. John Vaudrey died 26th March, 1832, aged 37. There are a number of the Vaudrey family buried at Denton Old Chapel, but those named above are interred at the Old Chapel, Dukinfield. That the Vaudreys were people of

taste is shown by the splendid collection of family portraits which was lent by various members of the family to the Jubilee Exhibition of 1907, where they created much interest and were greatly admired by the thousands of visitors who had the opportunity of seeing them.

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### THE BATES'.

The name of Samuel Bates is prominent in the records of the village of Stalybridge, he being one of the first cotton-mill managers when the trade was in its infancy. He is described as being impetuous and practical, and, like many of the pioneers, suffered from an accident, by which he lost the sight of one eye, the result of an experiment with the power-loom. He could card, weave, and spin, having passed through the various processes as a workman. He was known as the manager of the Stone Factory, Messrs. Halls, Castle Street.

Samuel Bates was twice married. By his first wife he had two sons, John and Samuel. Samuel Bates, junr. went to Copley, John Bates remained at Castle Street Mills, where he, too, became manager and afterwards a partner in the firm of Messrs. Hall and Bates. In the days of the Police Commissioners John Bates was a very active member of that body, and in other ways was of much service to the growing town. His career was cut short by death on the 1st September, 1851, when he passed away at the comparatively early age of 44 years, leaving a widow and one son, Ralph Bates, to mourn his loss.

## THE SIDEBOTTOMS.

“The Sidebottoms,” as the local firm of cotton manufacturers are generally spoken of, were a branch of the ancient family which gave its name to Sidebottom Fold, Stayley.

Leaving their hill-side home in the latter part of the eighteenth century, we find mention in the old Directories of 1794 and 1797 of:—“William Sidebottom, cotton spinner, James Sidebottom, cotton spinner, and Edward Sidebottom, woollen manufacturer.”

At a later period, 1825, we find a William Sidebottom in business in Caroline Street, Stalybridge, he being the father of Edward Sidebottom, who, in his turn, was father to Thomas Hadfield Sidebottom, Walter Sidebottom, and James Sidebottom.

Mr. Edward Sidebottom went into partnership with Mr. James Wagstaffe, and they commenced business at the little mill in Currier Lane, now known as Cock-Brook. Their business prospered, and they built Aqueduct Mills, which they worked until about the year 1836, when the partnership ended.

The Robinson Street Mills were built by a Mr. Daniel Howard, who through some cause or other relinquished possession, and the establishment passed into the hands of the firm afterwards known as “Edward Sidebottom and Sons.”

Edward Sidebottom at the time of his death (24th December, 1854) was a Justice of the Peace for the sister counties of Lancashire and Cheshire.

Thomas Hadfield Sidebottom, his eldest son, was

Mayor of Stalybridge in 1860-61. He died 30th January, 1871, aged 53 years. Walter Sidebottom, the second son, died 11th March, 1875, aged 53. Both of these gentlemen were bachelors.

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### THE RIDGWAYS.

The name of Ridgway is inseparable from the mechanical history of Stalybridge, for in the infancy of the cotton industry the members of the family who lived in the vicinity of Roe-Cross, Mottram, were known as wheelwrights, carpenters, and machinists, one member, in particular, by name Ignatius Ridgway, being gifted with the faculty of mechanical application to a remarkable degree. His ingenuity enabled him to construct and improve the primitive preparation machines in use in the cotton mills at that time, and he made carding engines, with doffers, flats, and cylinders, completing the machines and fixing them upon wood supports. Randal Ridgway, the nephew of this man, came to Stalybridge in 1828, and worked as a hand-spinner at Messrs. Wagstaffes and Sidebottoms. On the dissolution of the partnership in 1836, Mr. Ridgway was promoted to the post of manager for Mr. John Wagstaffe, with full control of the Aqueduct Mills. As a public man he held the positions of Police Commissioner, Town Councillor, and Justice of the Peace. Randal Ridgway, J.P., died December 11th, 1878, aged 80 years.

John Ridgway, son of the above, is also well remembered in the town. As a youth he was apprenticed to



the well-known firm of Lancashire machinists, Messrs. Parr, Curtis, and Madeley, and ultimately became the head of the mechanical department at Grosvenor Street Mills. A staunch supporter of the Mechanics' Institution and a firm adherent to the Co-operative Society, in fact, a front-rank man in every movement affecting the welfare of his fellow-townsmen, to whom he rendered excellent service. John Ridgway died December 28th, 1884, aged 66, respected and regretted by all who knew him.

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### THE ADSHEADS.

The firm, or firms, known as Adsheads are recorded as being the first in this district to introduce the spinning mule. The earliest member of the family of which we have been able to find a trace was Edward Adshead, of Stalybridge, who died 18th January, 1800, aged 98, and whose name is inscribed upon a tombstone in Dukinfield Old Chapel-yard, where many other members of the family are interred, including William Adshead, died 26th March, 1795, aged 35; Edward Adshead, died 17th June, 1820, aged 51; and James Adshead, died 19th October, 1839, aged 44.

The Adsheads appear to have originated from the neighbourhood of Millbrook, the substantial house thereat known as "The Wood" having been built by one of the family.

Staley New Mills, Stocks Lane, were built by the Adsheads, and the fine modern mills, North-End and River Meadow, were also erected by them. Originally

the family were connected with the Old Chapel, Dukinfield, where they worshipped, but upon the inauguration of St. Paul's, Staley, they attached themselves to that Church, to which they gave much financial aid and support. George Adshead, of "The Stocks," died 30th June, 1865, aged 66; James Adshead, of "Acres Bank," died 10th March, 1860, aged 69.

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#### THE OUSEYS.

Thomas Ousey, farmer and woollen manufacturer, held the farm on the right-hand side of Ridge Hill Lane, near the Quarry, now in the possession of Mr. Allen. In the year 1823 the farm consisted of about twenty-four acres of land, a substantial modern house, and improved out-buildings, which had been enlarged and modernized. Thomas Ousey had a large family, the best known of whom were Robert and Thomas, who became veterinary surgeons; John, who was well known as an auctioneer; Jane, who became Mrs. Henry Lees, and Sarah, who is still remembered as Miss Ousey, of Heyrod Hall.

Ralph Ousey, of Heyrod Hall, was connected with the mill afterwards known as the Print Works, and also with Black-Rock Mill. When the railway was constructed in 1844, the line passed through the centre portion of Heyrod Hall Estate, and Mr. Ousey sold the land to the company, and went to reside near Liverpool. A well-known railway contractor and engineer, Mr. Nowell, resided at Heyrod Hall for some time, but after the completion and opening of the line, the railway

company, having bought more land than was requisite, sold the Hall back again to Mr. Ousey, who returned to the place and ended his days there.

Ralph Ousey died in 1855, and was interred at Cocker Hill Church, where many of the Ouseys are buried.

Thomas Ousey, of Ridge-hill, and Ralph Ousey, of Heyrod, were cousins.

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## Chapter 4.

### LOCAL CELEBRITIES.

Francis Dukinfield Astley, Esq.—James Sidebottom, Esq., J. P., M. P.— William Summers, Esq., M. P.— Dr. Hopwood, V. D., J. P.— Robert Smith, Esq.

“We have only been able to dwell upon the more notable of our local worthies.”

*James Croston, F.S.A.*

### FRANCIS DUKINFIELD ASTLEY, ESQ.

**F**RANCIS DUKINFIELD ASTLEY was the son of John Astley, Esq., and was born at Dukinfield Lodge in 1781. His father died in 1787. His first rudiments of education were received at Hyde, and from thence he went to Chester, Rugby, and finally became a Fellow-Commoner at Christ Church, Oxford. At the age of twenty-five he was appointed High Sheriff of Cheshire, a position which had been held by many of his ancestors. Mr. Astley was an ideal country

squire, besides being a scholar and a gentleman, and the interest he took in the aspect of the locality is evinced in the fact that he planted no fewer than 40,000 trees on his estates in this district, for which act he was presented in 1807 with the silver medal of the "Society for the Improvement in Agriculture," and he moreover encouraged his tenants, as a silver cup bearing the inscription "Presented to James Ashton, for keeping his farm in good repair," tends to show. Mr. Astley was a daring rider and a thorough sportsman, and as a rendezvous for kindred spirits he built the well-known "Hunter's Tower" in 1807. During the period of the war with France, he remitted the rents of his tenantry, and distributed large sums of money to alleviate the distress in this neighbourhood. Thinking to benefit the district, he commenced iron-smelting, but the venture was a dire failure, and Mr. Astley lost a large fortune thereby. He published several books, which are now scarce, and was always a patron of art and literature. When Butterworth was struggling and seeking subscribers for his books, a friend who was acquainted with Mr. Astley sought his patronage on behalf of the historian. "What does it mean?" asked Mr. Astley. "Well, ten copies, sir," said the friend. "Nay," replied the Squire, "put another ought to it, and I am willing, and I will pay for them now," which he did. The following song was written by Mr. Astley to commemorate the opening of the Hunter's Tower, on the 27th February, 1807; the day was exceedingly rough and stormy:

“THOUGH THE STORMY WINDS DO BLOW.”

(*Air*—“*Ye Gentlemen of England.*”)

Hark! how with northern fury, the gales around us blow,  
And bear upon their angry wings the chase-forbidding snow;  
What though from storms opposing, our hunting we forego,  
Let our wine in goblets shine, though the stormy winds do blow.

Whilst Bacchus holds his empire here, Diana sure will join,  
And when we tell our gallant runs, we 'll pledge her sports in wine;  
For from her sports proceeding, health gives the ruddy glow,  
Driving care, and despair, though the stormy winds do blow.

Should Venus hither lead her court, and leave the Cyprian bower;  
And Love invite the blooming maid, to grace this favour'd Tower,  
Then as from lips of beauty, consenting accents flow,  
The hail and rain may rage in vain, and the stormy whirlwinds blow.

Who thinks of toil and danger, as o'er opposing rocks,  
Deep vales, heaths, woods, and mountains, we urge the subtle fox?  
And when the sport is over, with joy we homeward go;  
And the gay chase, in song retrace, though the stormy winds do blow.

Mr. Astley died with startling suddenness whilst on a visit to some friends, on the 23rd July, 1825. His body was brought home, and interred in the family vault at Dukinfield Old Chapel.

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### JAMES SIDEBOTTOM, ESQ., J.P., M.P.

James Sidebottom was the third son of Edward Sidebottom, Esq., J.P., cotton spinner, and was born at “The Hydes,” Stalybridge, in June, 1824. His father intended him for a commercial career, and to that end sent him to be educated at the Manchester Grammar School, where he received a sound training.

Upon the completion of his schooling he was placed

in the counting-house of the Robinson Street Mills, and forthwith became a member of the firm of "Edward Sidebottom and Sons."

Although Mr. Sidebottom was not gifted by nature with the robustness and physique for which most of our local "cotton-masters" were noted, he was ever in the forefront when matters affecting the welfare of the town and its people were in question, and from the time of his advent into public life until his lamented death, he "stood his corner" and "did his best."

His name figures in the list of Police Commissioners prior to 1857, a body with which the Sidebottoms had been connected from its inception. When the Incorporation of the Borough took place fifty years ago, Mr. Sidebottom was elected one of the first Aldermen, being at the time about 33 years of age.

On the 9th of November, 1864, he was nominated and selected to fill the Mayoral chair, as Chief Magistrate, a position he occupied for three years in succession, a period during which the re-action of the "Cotton Panic" had its effect in various ways. During his term of office as Mayor he performed many local functions, one of the most notable being the laying of the foundation-stone of the present Victoria Market.

Always on the best of terms with his workpeople, known personally to almost everyone in the town, without any show of pomposity or self-importance, he was ever in touch with his fellow-townsmen, and knew their feelings and failings. No wonder therefore that Mr. Sidebottom was selected by his party as a candidate

for "Parliamentary honours" on the enfranchisement of the borough. Subsequently he contested the election, and was returned as the representative of his native town in the House of Commons on the 19th November, 1868, by a large majority.

The first election is described by the veterans of both political parties as the keenest of all past struggles, the excitement increasing as the campaign proceeded. The declaration of the result of the poll did not suit the feelings of Mr. Sidebottom's adversaries, who, questioning the validity of the election, took proceedings which led to further excitement, and prolonged matters, undoubtedly to the detriment of the health of the sitting member.

A determination and desire to do his duty to his constituents impelled Mr. Sidebottom to attend at Westminster with great regularity. The re-action, however, set in. It was apparent to those who knew him best that the strain was too severe, yet, in the face of the advice of his medical and other friends, he "stuck to his guns" until it could no longer be denied that "the chequer'd years had told their tale, and nature would not be cajoled."

Early in the year 1870 the signs of ill-health manifested themselves, and although no thoughts of serious results were entertained, Mr. Sidebottom never regained his full vigour. The winter of 1870-1 proved too much for him, and he passed away at his residence, Acres Bank, on the 14th of February, 1871, at the comparatively early age of 47 years.

It is gratifying and interesting to sit and listen, in the chimney corner, to the recital of some party veteran, as he details the many episodes connected with Mr. Sidebottom's political career. To-day we can look through untinted spectacles at our subject, and feel proud to claim him as a man who in all things had the welfare of his fellow-townsmen at heart.

On the occasion of his funeral the route was thronged with persons of every grade, who by their presence paid a tribute of silent, yet heart-felt respect to Mr. Sidebottom's memory.

Above his last resting-place in the burial-ground at St. George's Church, The Hague, there stands a beautiful memorial, which was erected by a few of his best friends. His portrait and his name are still familiar in the homes of his admirers, and even those who in the political struggles of the past fought against him, hip and thigh, still admit that "Little Jimmy was a decent chap: we could do with a few of his sort to-day."

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### WILLIAM SUMMERS, ESQ., M.P.

#### SCHOLAR AND POLITICIAN.

William Summers was the second son of John Summers, Esq., ironmaster, and was born at Stalybridge on the 4th November, 1853.

He was educated at the private school of Mr. Wood, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, after which he entered Owens College about the year 1869. Gifted and clever, he became a very successful student, and gained honours at the College examinations. At the examination for



the first B.A. (London) in 1871 he took the exhibition in English, of £30 per annum, for two years, and was placed fifth in the second class in Latin. At the examination for honours following, for the B.A. degree, 1872, he was placed first in the third class in Logic and Moral Philosophy. At the examination for honours, following the first LL.B. examination, he was bracketed second in the second class of Jurisprudence and Roman Law. In 1872 he was elected an associate of the College. In 1874 he entered University College, Oxford, and in 1877 took the B.A. degree with a second class. At the examination for the M.A. degree (London) he took the Gold Medal in classics, the highest honour which the London University could confer, its value being enhanced by the fact that it had only been awarded on eight previous occasions. At College he also took the following scholarships and prizes,—In 1872, the Early English Society's Prize; 1872, the Wellington (Greek Testament) Scholarships, £20; 1872, the Shakespeare Scholarship, £40 per annum for two years; 1873, the Shuttleworth History Prize; 1873, the English Essay Prize.

When Mr. Summers left Oxford he read for the Bar, and was called at Lincoln's Inn, in 1881.

In addition to his scholarly achievements he was exceedingly proficient as a linguist, speaking French, German, Italian, Spanish, and a little Scandinavian and Russian. Even at the time of his death he was acquiring a knowledge of Old Hebrew and Greek.

His first appearance on the political platform is said

to have occurred at the Ashton-under-Lyne Town Hall, during the series of meetings held in consequence of the "Bulgarian atrocities" in the year 1876. In November, 1878, it was publicly announced that Mr. Summers would be a candidate for Parliamentary honours at the forthcoming election. Eventually he was adopted as candidate by the Liberal party of Stalybridge and Dukinfield, and on the 13th March, 1880, he published his address to the electors. He was nominated by William Storrs, Esq., and Thomas Beeley, Esq., and was returned as M.P. for the borough in the contest that followed on April 3rd, 1880.

In May, 1881, he delivered his maiden speech in the House of Commons. His speech on the second reading of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Bill created a very favourable impression, and he was selected by the party leaders to second the Address at the opening of the 1884 Session. In 1881 he visited Ireland, and obtained much practical knowledge for future use. At the General Election of 1885 he again contested his native town, but was defeated by his previous adversary, Tom Harrop Sidebottom, Esq. His absence from Westminster during the succeeding Parliament provided him with the opportunity of travelling abroad, and he subsequently visited Turkey, Greece, Russia, Egypt, Spain, Portugal, and the United States of America. At the General Election of 1886 he was the recipient of invitations from various important constituencies, and ultimately selected Huddersfield, for which town he was returned to Parliament, being

re-elected at the General Election of 1892. At this period Mr. Summers was recognised as one of the most effective platform speakers of his time, his services being eagerly sought throughout the United Kingdom.

On the 14th of October, 1892, he left this country for India, his intention being to remain absent for about three months. On his arrival at Bombay in the middle of November he proceeded to Peshawur, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra, and finally, Allahabad, where, it is believed that he intended being present at the conference then being held in connection with the National Indian Congress. It was while staying at Allahabad that he was attacked by a malignant type of small-pox, which rapidly reached a critical stage and proved fatal. Mr. Summers died on the 1st January, 1893, and would in all probability, according to the custom of the country, be interred within a few hours of his decease. The sad news fell like a thunderbolt upon the people of this district, and upon all hands were heard heart-felt expressions of regret and sorrow at the sudden and unexpected termination of a brilliant career. Within a few hours of the receipt of the news, his old political opponent, T. H. Sidebottom, Esq., penned a letter to a friend from which the following words are quoted:—

“ Etherow House, Jan. 3rd, 1893. . . . I have had the misfortune to differ from him in politics, but cannot refrain from saying that I most deeply and sincerely lament and deplore his loss. . . . He was always a most powerful and formidable opponent, but, after the battle, was ever ready to shake hands and be friends.

. . . . He had the possibilities of a great—perhaps a very great—future before him.”

The columns of the London and provincial Press contained many references to the career, character, and public service of Mr. Summers, from which the following selections have been culled :—

“ Mr. Summers’ death will be regretted by a large circle of friends ; especially those interested in education, who found in him a warm supporter.”

“ He had a thirst for information on all imaginable subjects, . . . in manner was quiet and earnest.”

“ He never flinched from the advocacy of a cause which excited his sympathy, however unpopular that cause might for the moment be—yet he managed to do so without losing the respect or the affection of those who disagreed with and opposed him.”

“ He was deeply interested in social questions, and by his actions in Parliament, and his writing in reviews, endeavoured to advance reforms.”

“ It will be long before his kindly presence will have faded away from the memory of those who were fortunate enough to know him.”

“ Mr. Summers never ceased to be in direct touch with the industrial classes, as the son of a large employer of labour. He knew from personal experience more of the requirements of the sons of toil, and he could see with greater precision the direction of their aspirations than many politicians of riper years. It was his ambition to offer at least a modest meed of help in the

momentous work of diminishing ignorance, indigence, and crime.”

“All who knew Mr. Summers will regret his untimely death, for he was one of the most kindly of the men who were returned to the last Parliament.’

From a letter written in reference to Mr. Summers during his lifetime by the late Rt. Hon. John Bright, we give the following quotation:—

“As one of the younger members he is regarded with much esteem, and also with much hope of his future, by members of the late House of Commons.”

Still vivid in the minds and memories of many of his fellow - townsmen is their recollection of William Summers. Well known to the working people, their interests and his own were one; and it is gratifying at this date to read the honest expressions of his political opponents as to his personal merits. We cannot bedeck his tomb with a wreath of immortelles, but we can cherish with a feeling of pride the knowledge that he was a credit and an honour to the town that gave him birth.

William Summers, although cut down in the zenith of his career, had achieved distinction and recognition, and has left behind him ineffaceable imprints, not only on the records of this locality, but also in the annals of his country. His record was one series of scholarly and mental victories.

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DR. HOPWOOD, V.D., J.P.

Robert Hopwood was the son of John and Martha Hopwood, respectable and striving folks,

belonging to the operative class. At the time of our subject's birth they resided in Ridge Hill Lane, their cottage being one of four which stood on the right-hand side as the pedestrian ascended the old road. The particular buildings were demolished some years ago during road improvements. Robert Hopwood was born on the 18th October, 1814, and, like many of his notable fellow-townsmen, commenced life in a very humble manner. As a boy he was employed at the cotton-mill of Messrs. Harrison, but showed early aptitude for a better position. He became as a youth a book-keeper in this mill, and lost no opportunity for self-improvement. A taste for anatomy and the study of physic, developed itself, the result being that he eventually became associated with Dr. Thompson, of Stalybridge, and, finally, qualified as a surgeon.

On the formation of the Stalybridge Town Council in 1857 he was elected a member. In 1861 he was Mayor of the town, and retained the honour for three successive years. It was during the trying times of the "Bread Riots" that the "Little Doctor" proved his grit and pluck. He rode on horse-back amongst a shower of stones and other missiles which were being hurled at the heads of the soldiers and policemen, and yet above all the hubbub and din were heard the entreating words, "Don't hit the Mayor." As Mayor he was chairman of the Relief Committee, a position of great responsibility. Amongst other things he was a strong advocate of the water-works scheme, a director of the Stalybridge Gas Works, and first chairman of the School Board,

which last office he held for a period of fifteen years. He was connected with the Mechanics' Institution from its commencement, and was the president of the Field Naturalists' Society connected with that establishment. As a member of the committee of the District Infirmary, and also as one of its medical officers, he did excellent service, being elected as president of its Board of Governors in 1890. In the early days of the Volunteer Movement he was to the fore, being enrolled on the 5th December, 1861. He attained the rank of Surgeon-Major in the Battalion, retiring from the service on the 9th May, 1883.

The older residents have many pleasant anecdotes about Dr. Hopwood, which, like those of our other local worthies, lose nothing in the telling. He resided for a long time in Portland Place, but on his retirement went to live at Heathfield, where, on the 18th April, 1897, he passed away at the advanced age of 83 years. His widow, Mrs. Maria Naomi Hopwood, survived him nearly three years, dying on January 27th, 1900, aged 96 years.

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#### ROBERT SMITH, ESQ.

Robert Smith, Schoolmaster, of Mount Pleasant Academy, Stalybridge, will long be spoken of by the residents of this district. A grateful remembrance of the beneficial results of his connection with the town and its people, in return for the practical and solid system of education he established, will linger in the hearts and minds of generations yet to come. The

traces of his labours are to be seen in the personalities of our leading successful fellow townsmen, whilst the past and gone celebrities of the locality were mostly men who had been at some time his pupils. Robert Smith was a native of Linlithgow, Scotland, where he was born in the year 1807, exactly a century ago. When about seventeen years of age he migrated to Stalybridge, where he remained as a resident for the rest of his life. He came to live with his uncle, Mr. Watson, who at that time had charge of the day school in Chapel Street, and with whom the young Scotsman was soon in harness as a pupil teacher. He was also connected with the Sunday School which was held in the same building, and the books, which bear the date May 1, 1825, give ample proof that the managers were alive to the abilities of Robert Smith as a penman.

Writing in those bygone days played a very important part in Sunday School work. Hundreds of children acquired the benefit of being able to read and write in the Sunday Schools, who would never have had the opportunity at other times.

It was the custom to appoint the best writers in the Sunday School as writing masters. In the record dated 19th June, 1825, there is a list of these teachers, the names appearing in rotation, according to ability. The name of Robert Smith heads the list, the second being John Bates, grandfather of our present Chief Constable ; following come the names of Thomas Wadsworth, Jesse Tinker, and others.

It would appear that Robert Smith was the successor



of his uncle, Mr. Watson, for it is recorded that on the 1st June, 1830, he became tenant of the school, for the purpose of week-day instruction. For a period extending over many years he carried on his day school in Chapel Street. Time passed on, and Mr. John Booth erected the well-remembered buildings which stood behind the branch Co-operative Store, Mount Pleasant, and there Mr. Smith took up his quarters on leaving the old school down in the town. Here he ruled his mixed flock with full control, and with great credit to himself and benefit to his pupils, until within a short time of his death. His spare, active figure is still remembered, and the peculiarities and mannerisms which seem to be inseparable from the vocation he followed are still spoken of by his former pupils.

On Wednesday, the 5th February, 1875, he was at his usual post in the school, but about ten o'clock in the evening he was taken ill and Dr. Hopwood was called in. It was found that he had heart trouble, and although he would not acknowledge it he gradually grew worse, until, after a day or two's suffering he passed away in the early hours of Saturday morning, February 8th, 1875, aged 67.

As was to be expected, his labours in the town for a period of over fifty years had forged for him a circle of connections amongst all classes, and it was said at the time of his decease that if all his friends were to be invited to his funeral it would mean a house to house visitation. The special feature, if there was any special feature, in his system of education, was the care and style

in writing which his pupils acquired. The penmanship which may still be seen preserved in the homes of many residents, in the form of manuscript exercises, is of a different stamp to that in vogue to-day.

His funeral was announced to be of a private nature, yet, notwithstanding this fact, a number of his old pupils, including several magistrates, town councillors, and others, assembled at the old school, and accompanied the remains to their last abiding place in St. Paul's Churchyard.

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## Chapter 5.

### SELF-MADE MEN.

John Summers, Esq., J.P.—William Storrs, Esq., J.P.—Thomas Wainwright, Esq., J.P.—Robert Broadbent, Esq., J.P.—Messrs. Taylor, Lang & Co.—Edward Buckley, Esq.

“God helps them that help themselves.”

*Benjamin Franklyn.*

### JOHN SUMMERS, ESQ., J.P.

**J**OHN SUMMERS was a native of Bolton, Lancashire, and was born on the 17th May, 1822. According to his own statements he was his own master at the age of fifteen years, and it was his delight to speak upon the subject to his friends, and tell of the struggles and trials of his early years. Mr. Summers was in business in this district about 1848, and subsequently founded the now extensive firm which bears his name. Possessed of a keen business foresight, he

studied the market prices of material, and profited largely by investments which he made. Mr. Summers was much interested in the Mechanics' Institution where he rendered excellent service. It may be of interest to know that when the idea of Public Baths was mooted in Stalybridge, Mr. Summers entered into the question with great energy. About the year 1866 the desire for " Baths " asserted itself, and was discussed by the Town Council. A public meeting for the purpose of assisting the project was called, the result being that Messrs. John and William Leech offered £500 towards the object proposed, and other sums were promised. A deputation was appointed to wait upon Robert Platt, Esq., at Dunham Hall, when Mr. Summers, as one of the party, introduced the question and pleaded so ably for it that, after listening patiently, Mr. Platt retired to consult his wife upon the matter, and returning, said that he (Mr. Platt) and Mrs. Platt were prepared to erect the necessary Public Baths at their own cost.

Mr. Summers was the first Chairman of the Baths Committee, having been a member of the Town Council in 1858-61, and again from 1865 to 1870.

John Summers, Esq., died on the 10th April, 1876, at the age of 54 years, and his remains were interred at St. John's Church, Dukinfield.

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#### WILLIAM STORRS, ESQ., J.P.

William Storrs was the son of George Storrs, a corn miller, of Doncaster, and was born on the 3rd July, 1828, at Sheffield.

His parents migrated to Stalybridge about the year 1832. As a lad the future contractor was apprenticed to Mr. John Bayley to learn the trade of joiner, and on attaining his majority, worked for some short period as a journeyman. This position did not satisfy his ambition, for we find that in the year 1851 Mr. Storrs commenced business on his own account as a builder and contractor. He soon worked up a connection, and established a reputation which grew, until his name became recognised not only in this district but throughout the North of England as that of a conscientious and experienced builder. As a proof of the solid and business-like manner of his dealings, he has left behind him many pleasant memories, whilst numerous buildings throughout the district, including the District Infirmary, the Baths, and the Victoria Market, are monuments of his skill. From the erection of a substantial cotton mill to the restoration of a stately cathedral, scarcely any class of constructive work was left untouched. As a youth he showed marked signs of practical and methodical gifts, being for several years honorary librarian to the Mechanics' Institution of that day. At a later stage he filled the position of tutor to the elementary and technical classes attached to that place, and ever continued his connection, having been a vice-president for many years at the time of his death.

His services to the town were numerous and varied. In 1872 he was elected to the Council Chamber as a representative for Dukinfield Ward, and in the same year he was elected a member of the Board of Guardians,

of which body he was Chairman in 1885. In 1874 his name was placed on the Commission of the Peace for the Borough, and a few years later he became a magistrate for the County of Chester. Mr. Storrs was a Churchman of broad views, and a trustee for some of the property connected with St. Paul's, Stayley.

In addition to his contracting business he had large financial interests in the firm of "John Wagstaffe and Co.," of which he was chairman. He was also chairman of the Tame Valley Thread Mills, Ltd., a director of Albion Mills, and chairman of the "Red R. Steamship Company, Newcastle," one of whose boats was named, in compliment to him, the "William Storrs."

In physique Mr. Storrs was one of the finest men in this vicinity, and being gifted with a constitution hardened and developed by practical training in early manhood, it was therefore a surprise that he should pass away at the very period of his life when his valuable experience and advice would have been so useful to his fellow townspeople. Mr. Storrs was supposed to have contracted lead poisoning, and he died at Southport, 3rd June, 1894, his remains being conveyed to St. Paul's Churchyard, Stayley, where they were reverently interred.

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### THOMAS WAINWRIGHT, ESQ., J.P.

Thomas Wainwright was one of three sons of Benjamin Wainwright, a pioneer of the engineering and millwright business in the Manchester district. So far back as the year 1818 we find the name in the local Directory, of Benjamin Wainwright, Millwright,

Rassbottom. It would appear that in consequence of the growth of his business the elder Wainwright migrated to the Cheshire side of the town, and installed himself in the premises now considerably enlarged and carried on by the existing firm. After the death of Benjamin Wainwright the responsibility fell upon the shoulders of our subject, who, by his activity, forethought, and strict attention to business, built up the reputation possessed by himself and his successors.

Essentially a business man he had little time for politics. He had an intense fondness for his connection with Freemasonry, of which ancient fraternity he was a devout craftsman. His sympathies were with the co-operative movement, and he was also a very earnest supporter and worker in the early days of the Mechanics' Institution.

In the year 1895 Mr. Wainwright was appointed a member of the Borough Bench of Magistrates, and attended his duties faithfully and consistently to the end. A few years before his death, when nearly eighty years of age, he was accidentally thrown out of his trap, and the effects of that mishap left irreparable traces behind. Although he had passed the "time limit," his interest in his business was undiminished, and even on the day of his death he spent several hours at the Commercial Iron Works. Mr. Wainwright died at his residence in Stocks Lane, on the 7th October 1901, at the age of 83 years. A man of strong personality and marked character, he is still remembered by many of his fellow townsmen as a pattern and example worthy of imitation.

## ROBERT BROADBENT, ESQ., J.P.

Robert Broadbent was a native of this district, and was born about the year 1812. His early days and training were doubtless similar to those of his contemporaries, when a universal knowledge and a practical application supplied the place of the mechanical aids in use to-day. At that period machine shops were few in number and scattered in their location.

Robert Broadbent as a young man was the friend and fellow workman of Mr. Jamieson, afterwards known as a successful machinist and loom maker in this neighbourhood. During the development and perfection of the first steam hammer, at Messrs. Nasmyth's Iron Works, Patricroft, near Manchester, Broadbent and Jamieson worked side by side, journeying on foot each week-end to and from their respective homes. About 1838 Mr. Broadbent commenced business on his own account in a portion of the "Old Greasy Mill," Old Street, Stalybridge, whilst in 1848 his address is given as "Castle Hall Saw Mills," where he suffered, in conjunction with other tenants, by a disastrous fire. Subsequently, Mr. Broadbent established himself in the premises known as Phoenix Iron Works, where the firm still flourishes, and from whence their powerful machines are despatched to all parts of the world. Robert Broadbent, Esq., was a Justice of the Peace for the Borough, and reached the advanced age of 84 years. He died January 31st, 1896, and his remains were interred at St. George's Church, Cocker Hill, Stalybridge

## MESSRS. TAYLOR, LANG AND CO.

The well-known local firm of textile machinists, Messrs. Taylor, Lang and Co., was established in the year 1852, and from a very small beginning the progress made has been most marked, whilst it cannot be denied that to-day their name and fame as reliable makers of cotton spinning and other machinery are known not only in the great commercial centres of this country, but also far beyond the confines of the British Empire.

From a reliable authority we learn that many of those who afterwards became the founders of the firm, were connected as early as, if not prior to, 1850, with a co-operative store in Oldham, which only opened its doors after ordinary working hours, and where several of the more energetic members served behind the counter. It was there, amongst its members, whilst measuring, and weighing out the groceries, that the idea took root that if they could buy and sell groceries, they might have a try at buying iron and making and selling machines. This was the state of affairs when, on the 10th of January, 1852, there commenced what was known as "The Great Lock-out," which involved in its meshes the artisan iron workers and machinists of the Oldham and Manchester districts, resulting in many skilled operatives being thrown out of permanent employment, amongst the number being the future members of our local firm.

The idea conceived in the afore-mentioned Store now materialised, and resulted in the co-operation of 23



individuals, which “ appears to have been a spontaneous outcome of the community of interests and determined self-reliance.” Each member was well known to be efficient as a tradesman ; in fact, the majority had held positions as foremen, and have been classified as follows : Books (Pattern maker)—James Taylor ; Iron turners—John Storrs, Samuel Booth, Henry England, William C. Birch, Thomas Cheetham ; Fitters—Andrew Birchall, William Lees, Thomas Rhodes, Martin Scragg, Charles Rothwell, John Lang, James Byrom, Joseph Walter Watts, James Uttley, Joseph Rushton ; Joiners—James Whitehead, James Sutcliffe, Thomas Watson, Jacob Marshall ; Moulders—Thomas Armitage, Samuel Mitchell ; Grinder—Joseph Woolhouse. When they had organised themselves, a suitable town was sought wherein to establish the business, and after several places had been visited, Stalybridge was selected. Many risks and dangers lay before them, but the working-men masters appear to have had the fullest confidence in each other, and trusting to their united abilities and experience, they launched their enterprise on its course.

The new firm was known locally as “ The Amalgamated shop,” and was established in April or May, 1852, “ with a capital of £600.” With the avowed intention of succeeding, it was mutually agreed that each of the masters should receive as wages the sum of 15s. per week until they had obtained a firm footing and become established. This resolution meant a great sacrifice for skilled mechanics, who had been hitherto earning from 30s. to 50s. per week, and again, at this

very time each might have been in receipt of lock-out pay, varying from 10s. to 20s. per week. From its inception the firm made steady headway, in the face of stern and determined opposition, and the traditions of these early years are valuable and interesting. One incident is recorded in print, as under :—“ A short period after the firm had commenced work the owner of the premises, seeing a light burning, visited the works and found one of the masters hard at labour, and at an hour, too, long after every engine had been stopped and every workshop in the town was closed.”

Certain of our local cotton masters became alive to the merits of the new firm, and rendered assistance and encouragement in various ways, whilst to the credit of one gentleman it is recorded that he allowed his name to be used as surety on the purchase of a valuable piece of machinery which the new firm urgently needed. At the termination of a period of seven years from its formation, a re-organisation of the firm took place (1859) and seven of the original members withdrew their interests, viz. : James Sutcliffe, Thomas Watson, Martin Scragg, James Uttley, Thomas Cheetham, Charles Rothwell, and Jacob Marshall ; Samuel Mitchell had died prior to this time.

There is in existence a printed statement, published nearly forty years ago, which says :—“ That upon the withdrawal and re-organisation referred to, the firm was worth in machinery, stock and working capital, a sum which would probably reach £30,000.” Many of the originators lived to see their scheme attain

dimensions never anticipated. The last survivor of the original twenty-three masters, Mr. Martin Scragg, died at Romiley during the present year (1907).

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### EDWARD BUCKLEY, ESQ.

The foremost of our local mechanics and inventors, Mr. Edward Buckley, late of the firm of Messrs. Taylor, Lang and Co., is well worthy of notice in this volume. He was the son of Mr. Radcliffe Buckley, blacksmith, who in the early part of last century carried on business at the old smithy in Quarry Street, Stalybridge.

Edward Buckley was born in Brierley Street, Castle Hall, on the 13th April, 1838. He attended a day school conducted by Mr. Thomas Avison in the "People's School," Brierley Street. As a lad, on completing what was considered a suitable education, he went first as a grocer's assistant, but was afterwards apprenticed to the trade of wheelwright, with Mr. James Oldfield, who had a workshop at the corner of Huddersfield Road and Mottram Road, the site now being covered by a number of shops. Not finding sufficient scope for his ingenuity, which was a hereditary trait in the Buckley family, our subject left the service of Mr. Oldfield, and went to work at Messrs. Broadbent's, Machinists, etc. Here he remained until he became efficient as a mechanic, and for a time worked as a journeyman. A new firm of machinists being formed, with a workshop situated in Dukinfield, Mr. Buckley left Messrs. Broadbent's, and entered their employment, on the understanding that

he was to be ultimately a partner.

The venture does not appear to have been a monetary success, and the firm's existence was of short duration. The cause of its dissolution is not known to the writer. Mr. Buckley now obtained employment at Messrs. Taylor, Lang and Co., Castle Iron Works, who at that time made "carding engines."

Upon the firm's discontinuance of this branch of machine making, Mr. Buckley went into the "scutcher" department, under the superintendence of Mr. Thomas Rhodes, whom he subsequently succeeded as the head of the department. His wonderful inventive faculties had full play on the machinery which passed through his hands. The result was a series of improvements and labour-saving combinations, which have been a source of great profit to the firm, and also to cotton manufacturers in many parts of the world. As a result of his energies and growing financial interest in the firm, he was elected to a seat on the directorate in 1872, and from that time up to the termination of his career proved a worthy, reliable, and diligent guardian of the interests of the shareholders.

In manner he was somewhat reserved and quiet; in his dealings straight, and perhaps blunt. Having known himself the difficulties which face the aspiring working man, he needed no intimation to enlighten him as to the qualities of those who came beneath his supervision. Although his success had enriched him in a worldly sense, it made little difference in his bearing and domestic surroundings; pride and show were

strangers to his composition. His wife pre-deceased him, and from the time of her death a great change was perceptible in Mr. Buckley. He died at his residence on Cocker Hill, on the 15th May, 1894, in his 56th year, and was interred at St. Paul's Church.

A Conservative in politics, he attained the position of Town Councillor, and died during his term of office, respected and regretted by all who knew him.

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## Chapter 6.

### LOCAL ARTISTS.

John Lees—Thornton Ousey—Joseph Wild—William Nolan—Buckley Ousey—Samuel Maden.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

*Keats.*

### JOHN LEES.

**J**OHN LEES was the son of Edward Lees, a woollen manufacturer, of Hazlehurst, near Hartshead, where the family had been settled for many generations, but came to reside at Rassbottom about the year 1788, and there, on the 6th January, 1790, John Lees was born. At a very early age he worked in the cotton mill, and as a youth was employed by Mr. James Bayley as a hand spinner, becoming a few years later the manager of a small mill near Glossop. Being ambitious, and also of an artistic turn, he quitted the mill and found employment as a painter and decorator, working at the renovation of the Old Hall, Ashton-under-Lyne.

A well-known London artist named Mr. Parry was at this period engaged upon a number of commissions in Stalybridge, including several of the Vaudrey portraits which were hung in the Jubilee Exhibition. John Lees was a pupil of Mr. Parry, and became proficient as a portrait painter. Some of his work, toned and mellowed by the lapse of time, is still in the possession of the family, and is full and sufficient proof of the artist's wonderful abilities.

About 1821 Mr. Lees commenced business as a chemist and druggist, and in after years built the substantial premises in Market Street, which have been so long connected with the name of Lees; the ceiling of the shop he occupied was at one period a perfect work of art, being painted with extreme care and taste, as a decoration. The work is still remembered, and, according to report, must have taken a great length of time in execution, as Mr. Lees, whilst painting, would have to lie upon his back, supported by a temporary platform.

A fine specimen of the work of Mr. Lees, "A View of Old Stalybridge," was presented to the Stalybridge Corporation by the late Mr. William Chadwick, with a wish that it should be placed in the Astley-Cheetham Free Library. It now, however, hangs in the Town Hall.

Mr. Lees attained the advanced age of 85 years, and died at his residence in Market Street, Stalybridge, on April 19th, 1875. His remains were interred in the ancient burial ground attached to Mottram Church.

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## THORNTON OUSEY.

Thornton Ousey was a member of a very old Stalybridge family, and was born about the year 1810. As a youth he was apprenticed to the trade of house painting and decorating, but a taste for art being a natural gift, he became proficient as an artist, and judging by the specimens of his work which are still to be seen, his talents were of no mean order. In the year 1848, we find that he was in business in Stalybridge as a painter, carver, and gilder, and was known also as an artist. There is little to be gleaned from the printed records of the district which can throw any light upon his early days.

A fine specimen of his work was offered by Alderman Fentem on the occasion of the opening of the Jubilee Exhibition, May 4th, 1907, towards the formation of a permanent Art Gallery in the Astley-Cheetham Library. Thornton Ousey died on the 7th September, 1864, aged 54 years, and was interred at St. George's Church, Cocker Hill, Stalybridge.

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JOSEPH WILD.

Joseph Wild was a native of Stalybridge, and as a youth served his apprenticeship to the business of hairdresser with his elder brother William Wild, near the Iron Bridge. In early life he developed a taste for drawing and painting, which was encouraged, and a course of lessons under a prominent Manchester artist followed. Mr. Wild was also a musician, being able to play on the violin, and, further, he made a violin

for himself which is still in existence. The choice of subjects dealt with by him as an artist were of the widest range, viz.:—portraits, still life, landscape, flowers, and fruit, in which last branch he was extremely successful. As his artistic powers became known, he gave up his business of hairdressing and devoted himself wholly to painting. About the year 1872 Mr. Wild visited the United States of America, where he sold a great many of his pictures, and where he also received numerous commissions; the climate proved unsuitable, and he returned to this country. In manner he was refined, and perhaps reserved, and as a companion and friend was ever welcome. He was a regular exhibitor at the Royal Institution, Manchester, and amongst his large circle of acquaintances he numbered Thomas Crozier, of Manchester, John Coulton, Ben Garside, Joseph Slater, Basil Bradley, and many well-known artists of the time. A large number of the pictures hung in the Jubilee Exhibition were from his brush, including the portrait of Jethro Tinker, which the artist painted and presented to the Stamford Park Museum more than thirty years ago. Joseph Wild died at his residence in Market Street, on the 9th March, 1876, in his 51st year, and was interred at St. Paul's Church, Staley.

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#### WILLIAM NOLAN.

William Nolan was a cotton operative, and was employed for the greater part of his life at Messrs. Leech's, Grosvenor Street Mills, Stalybridge. Being



of an artistic bent he commenced to draw and paint during his leisure hours, and also dabbled in photography during the days of the wet-plate system. He was remarkable as being the only pupil of the late Ben Garside, a local artist of talent, two of whose pictures, the portrait of Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P., and "King Charles I.," hang in the Ashton-under-Lyne Town Hall. William Nolan painted the portrait of "The Old Postman," exhibited in the Jubilee Exhibition of 1907, and also an ambitious copy of "The Last Sleep of Argyle," the original of which hangs in Peel Park Art Gallery, Salford. He could never be induced to give advice or undertake the instruction of pupils. Contemporary with Joseph Slater, of Ashton, and other local artists, he for many years resided in Cross Leech Street, Stalybridge, where he passed away on the 17th April, 1888, at the comparatively early age of 46.

By a strange coincidence his remains were interred by the side of his old friend and tutor, Ben Garside, on the lower slope of the Dukinfield Cemetery.

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#### BUCKLEY OUSEY, R.C.A.

Buckley Ousey was born in Castle Street, Stalybridge, in the year 1851, his father, who died a few weeks before our subject came into the world, being a clerk at Castle Street Mills. Whilst the future artist was a child, his mother also passed away, and the lad was from that time resident with his aunt, Mrs. Whitehead, in King Street.

He commenced work early at the mills of Albert Hall,

Esq., and remained there up to their closing, when he found employment at the North End Mills, using his spare time in sketching, drawing, and painting. His artistic career was a continued struggle against adverse circumstances, until within a short period of his death. On one occasion a number of local gentlemen sent him to North Wales to paint, and later still a Bolton admirer undertook to assist him, sending him to Antwerp, where he pursued a course of study. Then it was that success at last appeared certain, and his work began to find ready purchasers; commissions poured in, but another fact asserted itself, for it became apparent that a fatal disease existed in his frame. At the time of his death, 4th February, 1889, he had unexecuted commissions which would have yielded a large sum of money. He left a widow and eight children. In March, 1890, an exhibition of paintings, etc., chiefly by Mr. Ousey, for the benefit of his widow and family, was opened by the then Mayor, Alderman J. Ridyard, in the Stalybridge Town Hall, which realised a very acceptable sum.

Buckley Ousey was buried at Conway, North Wales, and was followed to his last resting place by a large number of his brother members of the Royal Cambrian Academy of Water Colour Artists.

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### SAMUEL MADEN.

Samuel Maden is well remembered as a portrait painter, many specimens of his work being cherished in this town as family heir-looms. For several years he resided in Wakefield Road, Stalybridge,

and was more successful in his portraiture than the generality of artists are. Being of a genial and communicative disposition, he was well-known in various local circles, where his presence was ever a welcome addition. Essentially a self-educated man, by study and perseverance he had achieved a position as an artist, and often executed commissions for patrons in various parts of the country.

Several creditable duplicate portraits of noted statesmen and party leaders adorn the walls of our local clubs and institutions, and are evidence of his deft and skilful brush. Samuel Maden died on the 2nd November, 1894, aged 65 years.

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## Chapter 7.

### NOTABLE CHARACTERS.

James Baxter, the ingenious blacksmith—Joseph Heap, the village constable—Edward Godley—Joseph Hall—George Newton—The Smith Brothers—Samuel Hurst—William Hague, "Blind Billy."

Two local Athletes:—George Adam Bayley and Alfred Summers.

"It matters not what men assume to be, or good, or bad :  
they are but what they are."

*Philip J. Bayley.*

### JAMES BAXTER.

#### THE INGENIOUS BLACKSMITH.

**I**N the Manchester Gazette, of March 5th, 1796, there appeared a whimsical article, written in the Lancashire dialect, by Robert Walker, of Audenshaw,

known to readers of dialect work as "Tim Bobbin the Second," entitled "Enoch Disgraced."

The story relates to a Stalybridge blacksmith who had invented a machine which was to assist him in his work, and supply the place of a striker. The appliance was fixed behind the anvil, with a treadle attached, for the smith to put his foot upon when he needed the assistance of his one-armed striker. Having made all the necessary preparations, the heated iron was drawn from the fire and placed on the anvil, and the blacksmith, in bending over his work, accidentally placed his foot upon the treadle, when the obedient striker instantly knocked him down to the ground.

The story was printed in a book published by Walker in 1811, and is illustrated by a quaint copper plate engraving. The invention was the forerunner of the machine known as the "Oliver," of which there were formerly a number in use in the once noted Stalybridge industry of bolt making.

The identical son of Vulcan was James Baxter, whose smithy was situated in Hyde's Fold, and in the little village forge the principal part of the iron work used in the lock gates of the canal which passes through the Valley was made.

Just inside the higher gate of the burial ground on Cocker Hill there is a flat tombstone, the inscription upon which is almost obliterated. Many years ago the writer copied it whilst it was still readable. It was as follows:—

“ Here was interred the body of James Baxter, Whitesmith, of Stalybridge, who died 18th November, 1823, aged 60.

“ My sledge and hammer lie reclined,  
My bellows, too, have lost their wind ;  
My fire 's extinct, my forge decayed,  
And in the dust my vice is laid ;  
My fuel 's spent, my irons gone—  
My nails are drove—my work is done.”

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#### OWD JOE HEAP.

Joseph Heap was a well-known character in the village about the year 1820. He held the position of Village Constable, was one of the first auctioneers, and was also the landlord of what was known as “ Heap’s Vaults,” but which has been for several generations past, and is still known as, “ The White House.” At the period when Heap was the official representative of the law, there did not exist any place where he could “ lock up ” his prisoners, when he had any. On such occasions the constable had to take his charges to Ashton-under-Lyne, where they were lodged in the garret of a building in Cricket’s Lane, known as the “ Star Chamber,” until they were accommodated with other quarters at Lancaster Gaol.

Joseph Heap was the father of James and Henry Heap, and grandfather of the well-known auctioneer of our own time the late Mr. Robert Heap, of Cocker Hill.

## EDWARD GODLEY.

Edward Godley, or Ned Godley as he was called by the people of the locality, was born at Alt, near Hartshead, on the 1st May, 1772, and according to his own words was "a gradely mayflower." His parents came to reside at Souracre Fold, and from that time to his death he was connected with the district in one way or other. As a lad he became expert as a huntsman and angler, his services being requisitioned by the sporting gentlemen of the neighbourhood. By trade Godley was a hatter, but the fascination of the rod and gun interfered with his calling. His skill, knowledge, and ability, together with his sound judgment and quaint personality, earned for him the patronage and support of the local sportsmen. The services of J. Percy, R.A., were requisitioned, and the veteran angler has been handed down to posterity in portraiture, one example being shown at the recent Jubilee Exhibition. Ned Godley died at Heyrod, 8th March, 1859, aged 86, and was interred at St. George's Church, Cocker Hill.

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## JOSEPH HALL.

Joseph Hall, or "Owd Joe Hall," was born in 1787, and lived to the advanced age of 77, having been for nearly three-score years connected with the Stayley Hunt. In his later years he resided at the New Inn, Old Street, where he died on the 8th January, 1864, and whence, a few days later, his body was borne to Cocker Hill Churchyard, attended by upwards of a hundred

devout followers of the chase, many of them dressed in their well-worn livery, and attended by their faithful hounds. The incident furnished material for a well-known Lancashire sketch, entitled "The Huntsman's Funeral," by Ben Brierley.

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### GEORGE NEWTON.

This noted huntsman, who was born in 1777, lived to the great age of 94 years, and as a proof of his physical powers, it is recorded that at the age of 81 he walked from Stalybridge to Holmfirth, in order to attend the funeral of a brother Nimrod. In the eve of his life a number of real friends arranged for a weekly allowance to the old man, who, however, did not require it very long. He died on the 7th August, 1871, and was interred at Mottram Church, where a tombstone is inscribed to his memory.

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### THE SMITH BROTHERS.

The following is a record connected with a Stalybridge family, four brothers of whom enlisted and saw service.

Henry Smith, born 1784, enlisted at the age of 18, 1802, in the 11th Dragoons, lost one of his arms in action, and returned to Stalybridge in 1814.

John Smith, born 1785, enlisted at the age of 18, 1803, in the 48th Regiment. Fought in Egypt under the Iron Duke, and from the effect of the desert marches became totally blind. Returned home with a pension.

William Smith, born 1787, enlisted at the age of 18, 1805, in the 23rd Welsh Fusiliers. Lost one of his legs in action. Returned home with a pension.

George Smith, born 1795, enlisted at the age of 18, 1813, in the Royal Marines, Plymouth Division. On the reduction of the forces which followed the fall of Napoleon I., he was discharged, and returned to Stalybridge without a pension. On the 20th of June, 1871, at the Old Folks' Tea Party, by request of the Mayor, John Hyde, Esq., George Smith, then in his 76th year, entertained the gathering with a song.

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### SAMUEL HURST.

Samuel Hurst, known throughout the sporting world as "The Stalybridge Infant," was a native of Marsden, near Huddersfield, and came to Stalybridge when a youth. He was engaged as a labourer for some years amongst the stone-wallers and masons of the district, but eventually obtained work as a striker for the blacksmiths at a local machine shop. At this period the town was noted for its sporting men, and supporters of the prize ring in particular, and produced from amongst its sons several creditable wrestlers, runners, and jumpers. Hurst became associated with the sporting fraternity, and occasionally had a wrestling bout with some local favourite, when suggestions were made as to his prowess as a pugilist. Exceptionally well built, he stood six feet one-and-a-half inches in height, and when in condition weighed fourteen-and-a-half stones; hence the name of "The Infant."

His first appearance as a prize fighter occurred shortly after the great fight between Sayers and Heenan for the Championship of England, which ended in a drawn



battle, and Hurst was urged to challenge Heenan, money being readily found in Stalybridge for the support of its favourite. The challenge was ignored by Heenan on the ground that Hurst was a novice, as he had then never fought a battle.

The deposit money was sent to the office of "Bell's Life," where it remained until Tom Paddock challenged Sam Hurst to fight for the sum of £200 and the "Belt."

The fight took place on the 6th November, 1860. Hurst being victorious became the Champion of England, and returned to Stalybridge with the trophy, which was exhibited and much admired by his friends and supporters.

From the account of the combat we cull the following :

"One man entered the arena for the first time, whilst the other had not merely competed against all the notabilities of the present age, but had fought a bygone generation."

About a week after his return, Hurst, whilst staying at the Fleece Inn, Market Street, fell on the steps leading into the backyard and broke his leg. Whilst lying in bed he received a challenge from Jem Mace, and was matched to fight the noted pugilist within six months of the 19th of November. Hurst left Stalybridge with a limb not properly set, and was beaten by Jem Mace after a fight which lasted about forty minutes.

Samuel Hurst at one period was the landlord of a public house in Manchester. He died on the 22nd May, 1882, aged 50, and was interred at Phillips Park Cemetery, Bradford-cum-Beswick, Manchester.

## WILLIAM HAGUE ("BLIND BILLY.")

One of the noted characters of the town twenty years ago was the blind itinerant street preacher, known only to the majority of the inhabitants as "Blind Billy."

A tall gaunt figure, with a lurching gait, a stick in his right hand, with which he occasionally felt for the curb stone, and a wicker basket hanging upon his left arm, this humble disciple of Christ tramped unaccompanied about the streets and roads of this and the surrounding districts. Although blind, he possessed a wonderful knowledge of the local topography, the extent of his wanderings including Ardwick, Oldham, Saddleworth, Stockport and Glossop. In each of these districts it has been the lot of the writer to see him preaching, and it was pathetic to watch him threading his course along the streets, as he methodically paused, his lips moving whilst he counted to himself his paces, and then he would turn completely round ere proceeding on his way.

The following kindly appreciation, written at this date, is more lasting than a wreath of immortelles :—

"William Hague was often mocked and jeered at as he preached the Gospel in the back streets of Stalybridge, but of this fact we may all be certain, that he now occupies in Heaven a place nearer to the Throne than the majority of men of his or any other day. May God send to this district a few more "Blind Billy's,"—it needs them sadly."

Blind Billy passed away on the 12th April, 1888, at the age of 48 years, and his remains rest beneath an

unlettered mound in St. Paul's Church-yard, Stayley. He was one of those who truly did his best.

Many years ago the writer penned the following "Bit o' Foirewood," which refers to our present subject :

"Did yo' know poor Blind Billy? he's dead an' gone neaw;

He's gone wheer they need noather silver nor gowd—

Aw remember him weel, an' revere him chuseheaw;

An' aw'll tak' off my hat to ih' poor brid 'ut lies cowl.

We'd use 't stond an' plague him,—we didn't know then,

As he poured forth his sarmons at th' corner o' th' streets,  
Delivering his unheeded message to men,

I th' roughest o' weathers, an' th' darkest o' neets.

Owd Billy's gone whom', ther's no deaubt abeaut that,

He's gone to that land 'at he talked on so oft;

He's swapped his owd basket, his stück, an' his hat,

For a beautiful robe—'ut he's wearin' aloft.

Billy sowed some good seed, may he see heaw it grows

For he isn't blind neaw! far beyond the blue sky—

Ther's summat com'd tricklin' deawn th' side o' my nose,

'Yo' never know what yo' can do—till yo' try.'

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## TWO NOTED LOCAL ATHLETES.

### GEORGE ADAM BAYLEY, ESQ.

Foremost amongst the amateur athletes of his generation was George Adam Bayley, one of the younger sons of William Bayley, Esq., of Stamford Lodge, Stalybridge.

Adam Bayley, as he was called by his fellow-townsmen, was noted as a swimmer, wrestler, runner, and jumper, whom our veteran sportsmen are never weary of eulogizing, not without reason, as the following record of a single day's achievements will testify:—

At a great Athletic Festival held in Manchester, 29th July, 1865, open to all comers, Mr. Bayley's record is as follows:—Cleared the bar at 9 feet 9 inches

in the pole-jump ; Threw the cricket ball a distance of 105 yards ; Covered a distance of 18 feet 5½ inches in the long jump ; Cleared at a stand jump 9 feet 9 inches ; and won the 220 yards hurdle race easily.

For his wonderful feats that day he was awarded a silver medal for pole-jumping, silver medal for long jumping, and gold medal for running and jumping.

Contemporary with Mr. Bayley were the late Thomas Bazley Hall, Basil Hall, and the now veteran athletes, Gracchus Hall, Esq. and Alderman Fentem.

George Adam Bayley died at the early age of 31 years, 19th April, 1876, and was interred in the family tomb at Dukinfield Old Chapel.

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#### ALFRED SUMMERS, ESQ.

Alfred Summers, the fourth son of John Summers, Esq., ironmaster, was born at Stalybridge, and as a youth became noted as a very fast runner, and also as a jumper. From the numerous records of his achievements the following have been selected :—

At the Stalybridge Amateur Athletic Festival, on the Cricket Ground, Cheetham Hill Road, July 17, 1880, when over 300 athletes, including all the principal champions of the time, competed, Mr. Summers won the 110 yards Flat Race, covering the distance in 12 seconds ; also the 120 yards Flat Race. On this occasion he won £13 in cash, which he generously handed over to the Club Committee, who purchased cricketing tackle with it. In June, 1881, Mr. Summers defeated W. A. Dawson, Esq. (of Cambridge University) at Huddersfield, and

about a week later, at Widnes, he beat the well-known athlete, Davin of Carrick-on-Suir, at the long jump, covering the capital distance of 22 feet 10 inches.

Tall, strong, and broad-shouldered, he was an excellent type of the "clean-built" Englishman, and like his predecessor, Adam Bayley, he was good at any game he touched. In Rugby football he promised at one time to make a great name for himself as a "three-quarter," in which position his strength, speed, and pluck made him a dangerous opponent. Serious injuries, however, compelled him to retire from the football field.

Amiable and kindly in disposition, Mr. Summers was very popular in the district, and his tragic death on the line near Stalybridge Railway Station, on October 28, 1887, at the early age of 26 years, is still vividly remembered, and most bitterly regretted by those who knew him. His remains rest in the family vault at St. John's Church, Dukinfield.

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## Chapter 8.

### LOCAL LITERARY MEN,

John Jones — Thomas Kenworthy — George Smith — Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens — William Chadwick — Samuel Laycock.

"The feeling of veneration implanted in the poet's breast makes him cling to the past, even in decay . . . he is the ivy of animated nature."

*Richard Wright Procter.*

### JOHN JONES, THE WELSH BARD.

**J**OHN JONES was born at Llanasa, North Wales, on the 14th February, 1788, and during his boyhood

and youth worked in a cotton mill at Holywell, which was under the management of George Platt of this town. At the age of eighteen Jones entered the Royal Navy, and was present at the Battle of the Nile, being, on the termination of hostilities, along with many other seamen, paid off and dismissed the service. About 1820 he came and settled in Stalybridge, obtaining employment at Messrs. Platts, and was henceforth connected with the town. He published three volumes of poems, the last being dated 1856, his principal item being "The Sovereign."

The following lines are typical of Jones's style, being written as a memento of the arrival and inauguration of the peal of bells at Holy Trinity Church.

#### THE BELLS OF CASTLE HALL CHURCH.

Hail, Stalybridge! since new delights are thine,  
 No longer bow to Ashton-under-Lyne;  
 For thou canst, now, without presumptuous glee,  
 Boast of harmonious bells as well as she.  
 Now list attentive to the joyful sounds,  
 Such as before ne'er charm'd these humble bounds,  
 On wings ærial, let them ride abroad  
 Till heard at Staley and at Mottram Road.  
 The Hydes, the Hollins, and old Currier Lane,  
 Now hear, astonish'd, their melodious strain.  
 Ring on, ye merry set! ring on, ring on,  
 Loud as Bow Bells that spoke to Whittington;  
 The nobler sons of industry are here,  
 Them let your sweet congratulations cheer.  
 Wound no soft breast with future mourning peals,  
 But kindly spare the widow'd heart that feels.  
 Ring not to hail victorious sons of Mars,  
 But let oblivion veil them and their wars,  
 Commemorate no sanguine Waterloo,  
 But, with its victor, hide it from our view.  
 Let married couples, as the church they leave,  
 A joyous, loud, and merry peal receive.

Let the bless'd birthday of our Saviour be  
'Bove all distinguished by your boundless glee,  
Resound till angels, once, o'er Bethlehem's plain,  
From their celestial seats descend again ;  
And list to human strains, as earthly beings  
Have done to heavenly in remoter scenes.

His latter years were somewhat shadowed by penury, and he died at his cottage in Oxford Street, Stocks Lane, on June 19th, 1858, when by requisition, he was given a public funeral. His remains, reverently followed by nearly a hundred of his admirers and friends, were deposited in the burial ground behind Grosvenor Square Chapel, in the front of which edifice a neat tablet may be seen, commemorating his talents.

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#### THOMAS KENWORTHY.

Thomas Kenworthy, The Rhymester, was born in Old Street, Stalybridge, on the 9th February, 1790. He was the son of Thomas Kenworthy, a mill manager, and being one of a numerous family, was put to work in the cotton mill at a very early age. From little-piecer, he passed through various degrees until he became a spinning master and responsible overlooker.

The friend and contemporary of George Smith, J. C. Prince, John Jones, and other local literary celebrities, he contributed to the magazines and newspapers of his time, his forte being local song and lyrical rhymes, and his most popular production was "The Old Iron Well." The subject of this song was a spring well noted for its clear and crystal water, which was said to possess some peculiar medicinal properties derived from the minerals in its vicinity. Some of our aged townspeople still sing

the old song to the melody of "The Mistletoe Bough."

THE OLD IRON WELL.

A soldier I've been, and I've fought in the wars ;  
For my country I've bled, you may see by my scars ;  
But now I'm returned to the land of my birth,  
'Tis to me the most beautiful spot upon earth.

Oh ! the old iron well — oh ! the old iron well.

My cot lonely stands on the banks of the Tame,  
At the foot of yon' Lodge, that was once held in fame—  
'Mid scenes quite romantic, where wild flowers smell,  
There's the roar of the weir—there's the old iron well.

Oh ! the old iron well—oh ! the old iron well.

In spring I rise early : 'twas always my pride,  
With my rod and my line to stand whipping the tide ;  
In deep shining waters where speckled trout dwell,  
On my own native sod, near the old iron well.

Oh ! the old iron well—oh ! the old iron well.

Dear haunts of my childhood, I hail you with joy,  
As down on your flower spangled meadows I lie ;  
I can roam at my ease through each dingle and dell,  
Then return to my cot near the old iron well.

Oh ! the old iron well—oh ! the old iron well.

My country I love thee, wherever I roam !  
For I find it through life, " There's no place like home,"  
Home clings to the heart like some magical spell,  
Oh ! 'tis fairyland all round the old iron well.

Oh ! the old iron well—oh ! the old iron well.

The music of waters—adown the vast steep—  
On my senses fall sweetly, they lull me to sleep ;  
I can rise by the lark—not the clink of the bell,  
And for tea-water trudge to the old iron well.

Oh ! the old iron well—oh ! the old iron well.

. . . . .

But sickness steals o'er me, and soon I must die ;  
Deep down in yon'd old chapel-yard let me lie ;  
There—drink, smoke tobacco, and old stories tell  
Of honest old Jack—of the old iron well.

Oh ! the old iron well—oh ! the old iron well.

Kenworthy's poems and songs would fill a small volume if printed collectively, and as a compliment to



his talent, on the 30th November, 1865, a "Grand Musical and Literary Entertainment" was given in the Stalybridge Mechanics' Institution, in which the following took part:—J. Critchley Prince, Ben Brierley, J. Burgess, E. Grimshaw, Irvine Dearnaley, J. Ingham, the Stalybridge Glee Union, Mr. Higham, and Miss Whitham. The effort benefited the poet to the amount of £30. Thomas Kenworthy died at Dukinfield, 20th April, 1869, aged 78 years, and his remains lie in an unlettered grave in the Dukinfield Cemetery—"And this is local fame."

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### GEORGE SMITH, THE MOORLAND MINSTREL.

Born at Roughtown, near Mossley, on the 2nd of March, 1794, he came to work as a lad of tender years at the mills in Stalybridge, and was connected with the cotton industry of the vicinity for the greater part of his life. On attaining maturity he became a mill manager, utilising his leisure in literary pursuits and horticulture.

The following specimen of Mr. Smith's poetic composition is to be found amongst the collection known as "Gems of Thought and Flowers of Fancy," published by Richard Wright Procter:—

#### THE NEGLECTED PARD.

Child of the Lyre, 'tis hard of thee to sing  
 When stern reverses bind thy soaring wing,  
 Bind it to earth; and yet there 's beauty there,  
 Food for the mind, as delicate and rare  
 As poets need to banquet on; a store  
 Thou may'st partake until the soul runs o'er.

And yet 'tis sad for genius to behold  
 The eyes of soulless men, all calm and cold,  
 Pass o'er the beauties of his written thought,  
 So feelingly, so musically wrought,  
 Woven and interwoven with each change  
 Of the blest seasons, in their varied range  
 Of bud, and flower, and fruit of many hues  
 Pendant above the fructifying dews :  
 Of cloudless noon, of crimson sunset fair,  
 Of twilight's hallowed hour of silent prayer ;  
 When his serene, aspiring thoughts ascend  
 From purest source of worship, thence to blend  
 With all that 's beautiful in earth and skies,  
 Shrined in his soul, and mirror'd in his eyes.  
 Retard his dreamy flight, he back recoils  
 To sordid earth's contaminating toils ;  
 A space too narrow, his aspiring mind  
 Would leap the clouds, and grapple with the wind,  
 Mix with the rainbow, revel in the storm,  
 And mould its power to every hue and form ;  
 Would chase the moon athwart the night,  
 And then, emerging from the dreamy light  
 Of clustering clouds, like snowdrifts tinged with gold,  
 Still yearn new charms and wonders to behold ;  
 Bathe in the fountains of celestial fire,  
 And wake to louder voice the music of his lyre,  
 Inspiring hope bursts into loftier song,  
 More cheering, more exalting, and more strong  
 In thought poetic or in pathos fine,  
 Than e'er was breathed from lowly lyre of mine.  
 How thrilling, throbbing, piercing, yet refined  
 His boundless genius rushes like the wind  
 Through mountain passes, deep, dark, lone, and wild,  
 Then sinks to quiet like a weary child.  
 Still in his soul a plaintive voice is heard,  
 Ascending from the depths of hope deferred  
 By the cold world's neglect, or scornful look  
 Of men who see no beauty in a book  
 Of nature or of poet ; men who find  
 More glory in their gold than all the realms of mind.  
 Gloomy incentives to a soul imbued  
 With all the poetry of gratitude,  
 That spiritual music of his lyre  
 Which, but for hope, in silence would expire,  
 Now that lone harp, in many a bitter pang,  
 Wails in its master's woe, where once it sweetly sang.

For many years, as the editor of the "Shepherd's Magazine," he was intimately connected with the author of "Hours with the Muses," and to his credit was the best friend of the more sinned against than sinning, John Critchley Prince. Retiring from mill life, Mr. Smith in 1854 became landlord of the Commercial Inn, Melbourne Street, and during his residence was elected a Town Councillor. Failing health caused him to leave public business, and he died in Ashton-under-Lyne, December 26th, 1860, his body being interred in the Old Chapel burial ground, Dukinfield.

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#### REV. JOSEPH RAYNER STEPHENS.

A Scotchman by birth, Joseph Rayner Stephens first saw the light in Edinburgh, on the 8th March, 1805, being the sixth child of John and Rebecca Stephens. As a youth he entered the Manchester Grammar School, and was a fellow student of William Harrison Ainsworth. Having completed his education he was ordained a Wesleyan Minister in 1829, but owing to his political and other beliefs he severed his connection with that religious body in 1834.

The granite obelisk in Stamford Park perpetuates the memory of Mr. Stephens in a worthy manner, the inscription on the sides of the pedestal, in conjunction with the excellent bronze medallion portrait, being explanatory. The verse of the poem by Mr. Stephens there quoted prompts the insertion of the whole of it.

## SCATTER THE SEED.

Scatter the seed ! the seed of truth, believing it will grow ;  
 Look on the wilderness in ruth, it was not always so,  
 A garden once, it may again, a lovely garden be ;  
 It wants the sun, it wants the rain, of God-like charity.

Scatter the seed ! the wholesome seed, of knowledge manifold ;  
 And time will deck the flowery mead, with blended white and gold,  
 No leaf so green as knowledge flings, unfading o'er the mind ;  
 No fruit so sweet as wisdom brings—rich fruit of every kind.

Scatter the seed ! the teeming seed, wide as the world abroad ;  
 Soon it will show itself indeed, the garden of our God,  
 We work and wait—we toil and trust, sure that the end will come  
 This wilderness of evil must be clothed with heavenly bloom !

Joseph Rayner Stephens died on the 18th February, 1879, and was interred at St. John's Church, Dukinfield, where the baptismal font formerly used in the King Street Chapel marks as a mute memorial his last resting place.

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 WILLIAM CHADWICK.

To the majority of our townspeople William Chadwick will be best remembered as Chief Constable, a position he held for 38 years ; but there was a feature in his composition which has earned for him a niche in the Valhalla of local scribes, and as a compliment to his memory, the author would gratefully acknowledge the kindly advice and encouragement given by the "Old Chief" on many occasions.

A native of Mottram, he quitted the village in his early manhood, and his after career brought him in contact with many whose names are fast passing into oblivion. Mr. Chadwick was contemporary with William Quarmby, Thomas Barlow, James Dawson,

Ralph Bernard Robinson, and many others, including all the better known scribes of the district. The inception and completion of the "Lawrence Earnshaw" memorial at Mottram was due to the energy and devotion of our subject.

His own book of "Reminiscences" is a compendium of incidents and facts, valuable and interesting to all home birds. Born on the 24th July, 1822, he lived on through a period which had seen more changes than any since the world began, and when the shadows of age brought their warning, he sought only to be quiet and alone. William Chadwick died at The Hague, Altrincham, on the 20th April, 1902, having nearly completed his 80th year. His remains were conveyed to Mottram, where they rest within a few feet of the cenotaph, with which his name must ever be connected.

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### SAMUEL LAYCOCK.

#### THE LAUREATE OF THE COTTON FAMINE.

Samuel Laycock was born at Intake Head, Marsden, near Huddersfield, on the 17th January, 1826, his father, John Laycock, being a hand loom weaver. About the year 1837 the family migrated to Stalybridge, and for seventeen years the future poet worked in the cotton mills of this district as a power loom weaver, and for other eight years as a cut looker. His first attempt at rhyming was written on a cop ticket. For nearly six years Laycock held the position of librarian and hall keeper at the Stalybridge Mechanics' Institution, and during his curatorship the Addison Club, a society of

persons literarily inclined, was formed, which, however, had not a lengthy existence. Never of robust physique, and thinking that the change might be beneficial, he left Stalybridge in order to take up a similar position at the Whitworth Institute, Fleetwood, when he was the recipient of a handsome testimonial and a purse of gold from his friends in Stalybridge, and at a later period of a further tangible demonstration of his popularity, from a number of artists and friends in Oldham, consisting of £120 in gold and a number of valuable pictures and books.

The following poem (incomplete) is inserted in this volume by the kind permission of W. E. Clegg, Esq., Oldham, the publisher of Laycock's complete works, "Warblin's fro' an Owd Songster."

#### ONLY A POET.

"Only a Poet," a schemer o' schemes;  
 A weaver o' fancies, a dreamer o' dreams;  
 Insanely eccentric, wi' long flowin' hair,  
 An' eyes strangely bright, wi' a meanin'less stare!  
 "Only a poet"—that 's all, nowt no moor;  
 An' as everyone knows, often needy an' poor;  
 Tho' that little fault may be remedied soon,  
 If th' minstrel could allus get paid for his tune.

.....  
 "Only a poet,"—a gazer at th' moon,  
 Or soarin' aloft i' some mental balloon;  
 Ah, some of 'em wingin' their flight to God's throne,  
 An' seemin' t' forget they'n a whom o' their own,  
 Wheer a wife may be ceaw'rd in an owd tattered gown,  
 Very patiently waitin' till th' husband comes deawn.  
 "Only a poet," a spinner o' rhymes,  
 An never caught worshipping' "dollars an' dimes."  
 "Only a poet"—a star-gazin' bard,  
 At may tell yo' th' earth's distance fro' th' sun to a yard;  
 But question him closely on trade, or bank shares,  
 An' he 'll show his ignorance bi' way 'at he stares.  
 Wanderin' throo' country lanes all the day long,  
 Gabblin' strange jargon, or croonin' some song;

Pennin' grand thouts 'at may make the world stare,  
 Then die in a mad-heawse, like poor John Clare!  
 "Only a poet"—ah! but what does that mean?  
 Bein' passed bi' a naybur witheawt bein' seen?  
 Becose just across there comes Alderman Stott,  
 An' he gets th' warm greetin' th' poor bard should ha got!  
 "Only a poet"—he 's nowt he con spare;  
 If his feelin's' are hurt a bit, what need yo' care?  
 For a poet is noan o' much use as a friend,  
 Since he 's nowt he con give one, nor nowt he con lend.

"Only a poet," so let him alone,  
 Or if yo' think fit, yo' may fling him a bone;  
 He lives o' such things—bones an' owd meawldy books,  
 At least one would think soa, to judge by his looks.  
 Yo' keep eawt o' th' way on him, foalkes, for he 's sure  
 To speak abeawt summat yo'n ne'er yeard befor;  
 He 's likely to tell yo' yo'n brains i' yo're yeard,  
 An' a soul that 'll live when yo're body 's gone dead;  
 He'll talk about spirit friends hoverin' reawnd,  
 When yo' know they 're asleep, fast asleep, deawn i' th' greawnd.  
 He 'll offer to lead yo' through nature's sweet bowers,  
 An' bid yo' admire her grand fruitage and fleawers,  
 Very grand an' poetical; nice food for kings,  
 Or bein's' 'at flutter abeawt us wi' wings;

.....  
 "Only a poet," like Bloomfield or Burns,  
 'At may happen amuse yo' an' vex yo' i' turns;  
 Neaw charmin' his readers wi' th' thouts fro' his pen,  
 Thus winnin' their heartiest plaudits, an' then,  
 It may be th' next minute yo'r filled wi' disgust  
 At some sarcastic bit, or some pointed home-thrust!

.....  
 "Only a Poet," what moor do yo' crave,  
 To sweeten life's journey fro' th' cradle to th' grave?

The Manchester Literary Club did justice to Laycock and credit to itself by electing him an honorary member, whilst the Burnley Literary and Philosophical Society paid him a similar tribute, and lastly the Blackpool Town Council placed him on its Free Library Committee.

Samuel Laycock lived for many years at Blackpool,

where he was in business as a photographer, confectioner, etc. He was a contemporary and friend of J. Critchley Prince, Edwin Waugh, Ben Brierley, and other of Lancashire's gifted sons.

He published three books, his last being "Warblins Fro' an Owd Songster," September, 1893, the issue of which he only survived about three months. He died, after a few days' serious illness, on the 15th December, 1893, and was interred in the Blackpool Cemetery.

*Finis.*



## LIST OF MAYORS.

The following gentlemen have held the office of Mayor and Chief Magistrate since the Incorporation of the Borough of Stalybridge in 1857, up to and including 1907.

Those marked \* are Stalybridge born, whilst those marked † are the surviving Mayors.

*1.	William Bayley .. .. .	1857-8-9.
*2.	Thomas Hadfield Sidebottom .. .. .	1860-1.
*3.	Robert Hopwood.. .. .	1862-3-4.
*4.	James Sidebottom .. .. .	1865-6-7.
5.	James Kirk .. .. .	1868-9-70.
*6.	John Hyde .. .. .	1871.
*7.	Ralph Bates .. .. .	1872-3.
8.	Thomas Fernihough .. .. .	1874.
†9.	Robert Stanley .. .. .	1875-6.
*10.	Thomas Harrison.. .. .	1877-8-9-80.
†*11.	Samuel Warhurst .. .. .	1881-2-3.
12.	Napoleon Ives .. .. .	1884-5.
†*13.	Mark Fentem, Victorian Jubilee .. .. .	1886-7-8.
†14.	Joseph Ridyard .. .. .	1889-90-91.
15.	John Cocker.. .. .	1892-3.
†16.	William Tinker .. .. .	1894-5.
17.	Thomas Machell .. .. .	1896.
†*18.	John Richard Norman, Diamond Jubilee	1897-8-9.
†19.	Allwood Simpson .. .. .	1900-1-2.
†20.	Robert Wood .. .. .	1903-4-5.
†*21.	Albert Sidebottom, Borough Jubilee .. .. .	1906-7.
†*22.	Robert Dawson, Mayor Elect .. .. .	1908.

## CONCLUSION.

It may be that this collection of miscellaneous gleanings is neither more nor less than a clumsily made bouquet of borrowed flowers, and that the only function performed by the writer has been that of an insignificant gatherer of unconsidered trifles ; it must, however, be remembered that the task was voluntary, un-commissioned, and non-official, purely a labour of love, and interest, to which circumstances were favourable. The hard and fast rules usually followed by trained scribes and commercial recorders being entirely unknown to the writer, he has, after his own fashion, endeavoured to place in permanent form the result of his labours, never for a moment trying to please everybody, knowing from experience that such a thing is utterly impossible. The original idea which presented itself to the author was the preservation of personal facts concerning our local worthies of the past, men who had, in some manner, left their "footprints on the sands of Time."

The facts, places, incidents, and individuals dealt with in these pages, have been as familiar during the last few months to the writer, as if they had been still in existence, and although the worthy men

whose brief memoirs are given, have left us, all must be proud to know and to feel that we have still in our midst, noble-minded townsmen, who by their generosity and sympathy, are even now building for themselves, memorials which "neither moth nor rust doth corrupt."

"The veil of obscurity should never be lifted with an unkindly hand," therefore many items have been committed to oblivion.

It may be a dream, but it is cherished nevertheless, that the information given in these pages will be welcomed and appreciated in this the Jubilee year. It is hoped that all will read with pride, and share as the writer has done, "in his mind's eye," the struggles, trials, sorrows, joys, and successes of our dead and gone celebrities who are even now speaking to us through their works, their lives, and their benefactions—from the shadow-land.



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GEO. WHITTAKER & SONS  
ECLIPSE WORKS  
MARKET STREET  
1907













Indiana Tini

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